



# OLD ENGLISH PLAYS.

## VOL II

INTERLUDE OF YOUTH

LUSTY JUVENTUS    JACK JUGGLER

NICE WANTON

HISTORY OF JACOB AND ESAU

DISOBEDIENT CHILD

MARRIAGE OF WIT AND SCIENCE



A SELECT COLLECTION  
OF  
OLD ENGLISH PLAYS.

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED BY ROBERT DODSLEY  
IN THE YEAR 1744.

*FOURTH EDITION,*

NOW FIRST CHRONOLOGICALLY ARRANGED, REVISED AND ENLARGED,  
WITH THE NOTES OF ALL THE COMMENTATORS  
AND NEW NOTES

BY

W CAREW HAZLITT

*VOLUME THE SECOND*

LONDON  
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AND 185 FLEET STREET  
1874





# THE INTERLUDE OF YOUTH.

## *EDITIONS*

*See Hazlitt's 'Handbook,' 1867, p. 464, and Remarks*

## MR HALLIWELL'S PREFACE<sup>1</sup> TO THE FORMER EDITION

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THE "Interlude of Youth" is probably the most interesting early-printed moral play that has descended to our times, and it may therefore be considered somewhat singular that it has hitherto escaped the notice of the publication societies. Its great rarity may, however, account for this circumstance, only two or three copies of any edition being known to exist. Waley's edition appeared probably about the year 1554, and has a woodcut on the title-page of two figures, representing Charity and Youth, two of the characters in the interlude. Another edition was printed by Copland, and has also a woodcut on the title-page, representing Youth between Charity, and another figure which has no name.

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<sup>1</sup>The "Interlude of Youth" From the rare black letter edition, printed by Waley about the year 1554. Edited by James Orchard Halliwell, Esq. Brixton Hill, 1849, 4to. 75 copies privately printed.

over its head The colophon is "Imprinted at London, in Lothbury, over against Saint Margarytes church, by me, Wylliam Copland" See Collier's "History of Dramatic Poetry," vol II, p 313 "The 'Interlude of Youth,'" observes Mr Collier, "is decidedly a Roman Catholic production, and I have therefore little doubt that it made its appearance during the reign of Mary," and he adds, p 315, "on the whole, this piece is one of the most amusing and most humorous of the class to which it belongs" A fragment of a black-letter copy of the interlude is preserved at Lambeth Palace,<sup>1</sup> and is described by Mr Matland in his "List of Early Printed Books," p 311

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[<sup>1</sup> Apparently of an otherwise undescribed edition See Hazlitt's "Handbook," p 464 ]

## INTERLUDE OF YOUTH.



### CHARITY

Jesu that his aims did spread,  
And on a tree was done to dead,  
From all perils he you defend !  
I desue audience till I have made an end,  
For I am come from God above  
To occupy his laws to your behove,  
And am named Charity ,  
There may no man saved be  
Without the help of me,  
For he that Charity doth refuse,  
Other virtues though he do use,  
Without Charity it will not be,  
For it is written in the faith  
*Qui manet in charitate in Deo manet*  
I am the gate, I tell thee,  
Of heaven, that joyful city ,  
There may no man thither come,  
But of charity he must have some,  
Or ye may not come, i-wis,  
Unto heaven, the city of bliss ,  
Therefore Charity, who will him take,  
A pure soul it will him make  
Before the face of God  
In the A B C, of books the least,

It is written *Deus charitas est*  
Lo ! charity is a great thing,  
Of all virtues it is the king  
When God in earth was here living,  
Of charity he found none ending  
I was planted in his heart ,  
We two might not depart <sup>1</sup>  
Out of his heart I did spring,  
Through the might of the heaven-king  
And all priests that be,  
May sing no mass without charity  
And charity to them they do not take,  
They may not receive him, that did them make  
And all this world of nought

## YOUTH

Aback, fellows, and give me room,  
Or I shall make you to avoid soon !  
I am goodly of person ,  
I am peerless, wherever I come  
My name is Youth, I tell thee,  
I flourish as the vine-tree  
Who may be likened unto me,  
In my youth and jollity <sup>2</sup>  
My hair <sup>2</sup> is royal and bushed thick ,  
My body pliant as a hazel-stick ,  
Mine arms be both big <sup>3</sup> and strong,  
My fingers be both fair and long ,  
My chest big as a tun,  
My legs be full light for to run,  
To hop and dance, and make merry  
By the mass, I reck not a cherry,  
Whatsoever I do !  
I am the heir of all my father's land,

---

<sup>1</sup> Part asunder<sup>2</sup> [*hearte*, Waley's ed ]<sup>3</sup> [Waley's and Copland's eds, *fan* ]

## THE INTERLUDE OF YOUTH

And it is come into my hand  
I care for no more

### CHARITY

Are you so disposed to do,  
To follow vice, and let virtue go ?

### YOUTH

Yea, sir, even so  
For now-a-days he is not set by,  
Without he be unthrifty

### CHARITY

You had need to ask God mercy,  
Why did you so praise your body ?

### YOUTH

Why, knave what is that to thee ?  
Wilt thou let <sup>1</sup> me to praise my body ?  
Why should I not praise it, and it be goodly ?  
I will not let for thee

### CHARITY

What shall it be, when thou shalt flit  
Fro thy wealth into the pit ?  
Therefore of it be not too bold,  
Lest thou forethink <sup>2</sup> it, when thou art old  
Ye may be likened to a tree,  
In youth flourishing with royalty,  
And in age it is cut down,

---

<sup>1</sup> Hinder

<sup>2</sup> Regret



And to the fire is thrown  
So shalt thou, but thou amend,  
Be burned in hell without end <sup>1</sup>

## YOUTH

Ye whoreson, tiowest thou so?  
Beware, lest thou thither go!  
Hence, caitiff, go thy way,  
Or with my dagger I shall thee slay!  
Hence, knave, out of this place,  
Or I shall lay thee on the face!  
Sayest thou that I shall go to hell,  
For evermore there to dwell?  
I had liever thou had evil fare <sup>1</sup>

## CHARITY

Ah, yet, sir, do by my reed,  
And ask mercy for thy misdeed,  
And thou shalt be an heritor of bliss,  
Where all joy and mirth is,  
Where thou shalt see a glorious sight  
Of angels singing, with saints bright,  
Before the face of God

## YOUTH

What, sirs, above the sky?  
I had need of a ladder to climb so high!  
But what, and the ladder shlp?  
Then I am deceived yet,  
And if I fall, I catch a queck,  
I may fortune to break my neck,

---

<sup>1</sup> A line, rhyming with this, seems to have dropped out

And that joint is ill to set  
Nay, nay, not so

## CHARITY

Oh, yet remember, and call to thy mind,  
The mercy of God passeth all thing  
For it is written by noble clerks,  
The mercy of God passeth all works,  
That witnesseth Holy Scripture, saying thus  
*Miseratio domini super omnia opera ejus*  
Therefore doubt not God's grace,  
Thereof is plenty in every place

## YOUTH

What, methink ye be clerkish,  
For ye speak good gibb'lish!  
Sir, I pray you, and you have any store,  
Soil<sup>1</sup> me a question, ere ye cast any more,  
Lest when your cunning is all done,  
My question have no solution  
Sir, and it please you this,  
Why do men eat mustard with salt fish?  
Sir, I pray you soil me this question  
That I have put to your discretion

## CHARITY

This question is but a vanity,  
It longeth not to me  
Such questions to assoil

## YOUTH

Sir, by God, that me dear bought,  
I see your cunning is little or nought,

---

<sup>1</sup> Solve

And I should follow your school,  
Soon ye would make me a fool !  
Therefore crake no longer here,  
Lest I take you on the ear,  
And make your head to ache !

## CHARITY

Sir, it falleth not for me to fight,  
Neither by day, ne by night,  
Therefore do by my counsel, I say,  
Then to heaven thou shalt have thy way

## YOUTH

No, sir, I think ye will not fight,  
But to take a man's purse in the night  
Ye will not say nay,  
For such holy cartiffs  
Were wont to be thieves,  
And such would be hanged as high  
As a man may see with his eye  
In faith, this same is true

## CHARITY

God save every Christian body  
From such evil destiny,  
And send us of his grace  
In heaven to have a place !

## YOUTH

Nay, nay, I warrant thee,  
He hath no place for thee,  
Weenest thou he will have such fools  
To sit on his gay stools ?  
Nay, I warrant thee, nay !

## HUMILITY

Well, sir, I put me in God's will,  
Whether he will me save or spill,  
And, sir, I pray you do so,  
And trust in God, whatsoever ye do

## YOUTH

Sir, I pray thee hold thy peace,  
And talk to me of no goodness,  
And soon look thou go thy way,  
Lest with my dagger I thee slay !  
In faith, if thou move my heart,  
Thou shalt be weary of thy part,  
Ere thou and I have done

## CHARITY

Think what God suffered for thee,  
His arms to be spread upon a tree,  
A knight with a spear opened his side,  
In his heart appeared a wound wide,  
That bought both you and me !

## YOUTH

God's fast ! what is that to me ?  
Thou daw, wilt thou reed me  
In my youth to lose my jollity ?  
Hence, knave, and go thy way,  
Or with my dagger I shall thee slay !

## CHARITY

O sir, hear what I you tell,  
And be ruled after my counsel,

That ye might sit in heaven high  
With God and his company

## YOUTH

Ah, yet of God thou wilt not cease  
Till I fight in good earnest,  
On my faith I tell thee true,  
If I fight, it will thee rue  
All the days of thy life

## CHARITY

Since<sup>1</sup> I see it will none otherwise be,  
I will go to my brother Humility,  
And take good counsel of him,  
How it is best to be do therein

## YOUTH

Yea, marry, sir, I pray you of that,  
Methink it were a good sight of your back,  
I would see your heels hither,  
And your brother and you together  
Fettered fine fast!  
I-wis, and I had the key,  
Ye should sing well-away,  
Ere I let you loose!

## CHARITY

Farewell, my masters everychone!  
I will come again anon,  
And tell you how I have done

## YOUTH

And thou come hither again,  
I shall send thee hence in the devil's name

---

<sup>1</sup> [Old copies, *So* ]

What ! now I may have my space  
To jet here in this place ,  
Before I might not stir,  
When that churl Charity was here ,  
But now, among all this cheer,  
I would I had some company here ,  
I wish<sup>1</sup> my brother Riot would help me,  
For to beat Charity  
And his brother too

## RIOT

Huffa ! huffa !<sup>2</sup> who calleth after me ?  
I am Riot, full of jollity  
My heart as light as the wind,  
And all on riot is my mind,  
Wheresoever I go  
But wot ye what I do here ?  
To seek Youth my compeer  
Fain of him I would have a sight,  
But my lips hang in my light  
God speed, master Youth, by my fay

## YOUTH

Welcome, Riot, in the devil's way !  
Who brought thee hitherto ?

## RIOT

That did my legs, I tell thee  
Methought thou did me call,  
And I am come now here  
To make royal cheer,  
And tell thee how I have done

---

<sup>1</sup> [Old copies, *z was* ]

<sup>2</sup> See Hazlitt's "Popular Poetry," iv, 239

## YOUTH

What ! I weened thou hadst been hanged,  
But I see thou art escaped,  
For it was told me here  
You took a man on the ear,  
That his purse in your bosom did fly,  
And so in Newgate you did lie

## RIOT

So it was, I beshrew your heart  
I come lately from Newgate,  
But I am as ready to make good cheer,  
As he that never came there ,  
For, and I have spending,  
I will make as merry as a king,  
And care not what I do ,  
For I will not lie long in prison,  
But will get forth soon,  
For I have learned a policy  
That will loose me lightly,  
And soon let me go

## YOUTH

I love well thy discretion,  
For thou art all of one condition ,  
Thou art stable and steadfast of mind,  
And not changeable as the wind  
But, sir, I pray you at the least,  
Tell me more of that jest,  
That thou told me right now

## RIOT

Moreover, I shall tell thee,  
The Mayor of London sent for me

Forth of Newgate for to come,  
For to preach at Tyburn

## YOUTH

By our Lady ! he did promote thee,  
To make thee preach at the gallow-tree !  
But, sir, how didst thou 'scape ?

## RIOT

Verily, sir, the rope brake,  
And so I fell to the ground,  
And ran away, safe and sound  
By the way I met with a courtier's lad,  
And twenty nobles of gold in his purse he had  
I took the lad on the ear,  
Beside his hoise I felled him there  
I took his purse in my hand,  
And twenty nobles therem I fand <sup>1</sup>  
Lord, how I was merry !

## YOUTH

God's fate ! thou didst enough there  
For to be made knight of the collar

## RIOT

Yea, sir, I trust to God Allmight  
At the next sessions to be dubbed a knight

## YOUTH

Now, su, by this light !  
That would I fain see,

---

<sup>1</sup> Found



And I plight thee, so God me save,  
That a sure collar thou shalt have ,  
And because gold collars be so good cheap,  
Unto the roper I shall speak  
To make thee one of a good price,  
And that shall be of warrantise

## RIOT

Youth, I pray thee have ado,  
And to the tavern let us go,  
And we will drink divers wine,  
And the cost shall be mine ,  
Thou shalt not pay one penny, i-wis,  
Yet thou shalt have a wench to kiss,  
Whensoever thou wilt

## YOUTH

Marry, Riot, I thank thee,  
That thou wilt bestow it on me,  
And for thy pleasure so be it ,  
I would not Charity should us meet,  
And turn us again,  
For right now he was with me,  
And said he would go to Humility,  
And come to me again

## RIOT

Let him come, if he will ,  
He were better to bide still ,  
And he give thee crooked language,  
I will lay him on the visage,  
And that thou shalt see soon,  
How lightly it shall be done ,  
And he will not be ruled with knocks,

We shall set him in the stocks,  
To heal his sore shins !

## YOUTH

I shall help thee, if I can,  
To drive away that hangman ,  
Hark, Riot, thou shalt understand  
I am heir of my father's land,  
And now they be come to my hand,  
Methink it were best therefore,  
That I had one man more  
To wait me upon

## RIOT

I can speed thee of a servant of price,  
That will do thee good service ,  
I see him go here beside ,  
Some men call him Master Pride ,  
I swear by God in Trinity  
I will go fetch him unto thee,  
And that even anon

## YOUTH

Hie thee apace and come again,  
And bring with thee that noble swain

## RIOT

Lo, Master Youth, here he is,  
A pretty man and a wise ,  
He will be glad to do you good service  
In all that ever he may

## YOUTH

Welcome to me, good fellow,  
I pray thee, whence comest thou ?  
And thou wilt my servant be,  
I shall give thee gold and fee

## PRIDE

Sir, I am content, I-wis,  
To do you any service  
That ever I can do

## YOUTH

By likelihood thou should do well enou' ,  
Thou art a likely fellow

## PRIDE

Yes, sir, I warrant you,  
If ye will be ruled by me,  
I shall you bring to high degree

## YOUTH

What shall I do, tell me,  
And I will be ruled by thee

## PRIDE

Marry, I shall tell you  
Consider ye have good enou'  
And think ye come of noble kind ,  
Above all men exalt thy mind ,  
Put down the poor, and set nought by them ,  
Be in company with gentlemen ,  
Get up and down in the way,

And your clothes look they be gay ,  
The pretty wenches will say then,  
Yonder goeth a gentleman ,  
And every poor fellow that goeth you by,  
Will do off his cap, and make you courtesy  
In faith, this is true

## YOUTH

Sir, I thank thee, by the rood,  
For thy counsel that is so good ,  
And I commit me even now  
Under the teaching of Riot and you

## RIOT.

Lo, Youth, I told you  
That he was a lusty fellow

## YOUTH

Marry, sir, I thank thee  
That you would bring him unto me

## PRIDE

Sir, it were expedient that ye had a wife,  
To live with her all your life

## RIOT

A wife ? nay, nay, for God avow,  
He shall have flesh enou',  
For, by God that me dear bought,  
Over-much of one thing is nought ,  
The devil said he had never burn all his life  
Than once for to take a wife ,  
Therefore I say, so God me save,

He shall no wife have  
Thou hast a sister fair and free,  
I know well his leman she will be  
Therefore I would she were here,  
That we might go and make good cheer  
At the wine somewhere

## YOUTH

I pray you hither thou her do bring  
For she is to my liking

## PRIDE

Sir, I shall do my diligence  
To bring her to your presence

## YOUTH

Hie thee apace, and come again,  
To have a sight I would be fain  
Of that lady free.

## RIOT

Sir, in faith I shall tell you true,  
She is fresh and fair of hue,  
And very proper of body,  
Men call her Lady Lechery

## YOUTH

My heart burneth, by God of might,  
Till of that lady I have a sight

*(Intret Superbia cum Luxuria et dicat Superbia)*

## PRIDE

Sir, I have fulfilled your intent,  
And have brought you in this present,  
That you have sent me for

## YOUTH

Thou art a ready messenger ,  
Come hither to me, my heart so dear,  
Ye be welcome to me as the heart in my body

## LECHERY

Sir, I thank you, and at your pleasure I am ,  
Ye be the same unto me

## YOUTH

Masters, will ye to tavern walk ?  
A word with you here will I talk,  
And give you the wine

## LECHERY

Gentleman, I thank you verily,  
And I am all ready  
To wait you upon

## RIOT

What, sister Lechery ?  
Ye be welcome to our company

## LECHERY

Well, wanton, well, fie for shame !  
So soon ye do express my name

What ' if no man should have known,  
I-wis I shall you beat ' well, wanton, well '

#### RIOT

A little pretty niset,<sup>1</sup>  
Ye be well nice, God wot '  
Ye be a little pretty pye ' i-wis, ye go full gingerly

#### LECHERY

Well, I see your false eye  
Winketh on me full wantonly ,  
Ye be full wanton, i-wis

#### YOUTH

Pride, I thank you of your labour  
That you had to fetch this fair flow'<sup>1</sup>

#### PRIDE

Lo, youth, I told thee  
That I would bring her with me  
Sir, I pray you tell me now,  
How she doth like you ?

#### YOUTH

Verily, well she pleaseth me,  
For she is courteous, gentle, and free  
How do you, fair lady?  
How fare you, tell me

#### LECHERY

Sir, if it please you, I do well enou',  
And the better that you will wit

<sup>1</sup> [Vele's ed *nilet*]

## YOUTH

Riot, I would be at the tavern fain,  
Lest Charity us meet and turn us again  
Then would I be sorry, because of this fair lady

## RIOT

Let us go again betime,  
That we may be at the wine,  
Ere ever that he come

## PRIDE

Hie thee apace, and go we hence,  
We will let for none expense

## YOUTH

Now we will fill the cup and make good cheer  
I trust I have a noble here  
Hark, sirs, for God Almighty,  
Hearest thou not how they fight?  
In faith we shall them part  
If there be any wine to sell,  
They shall no longer together dwell,  
No, then I beshrew my heart

## RIOT

No, sir, so mot I the,  
Let not thy servants fight within thee,  
For it is a careful life  
Evermore to live in strife,  
Therefore, if ye will be ruled by my tale,  
We will go to the ale,  
And see how we can do,  
I trust to God that sitteth on high,



To lese that little company  
Within an hour or two

## PRIDE

Now let us go, for God's sake,  
And see how meriy we can make

## RIOT

Now let us go apace,  
And I be last there, I beshiew my face !

## YOUTH

Now let us go that we were there  
To make this lady some cheer

## LECHERY

Verily, sir, I thank thee,  
That ye will bestow it on me,  
And when it please you on me to call,  
My heart is yours, body and all

## YOUTH

Fair lady, I thank thee ,  
On the same wise ye shall have me,  
Whatsoever you please

## PRIDE

Riot, we tarry very long

## RIOT

We will go even now with a lusty song

## PRIDE

In faith, I will be rector of the chon

## YOUTH

Go to it then hardily, and let us be agate

## CHARITY

Abide, fellow, a word with thee  
Whither go ye, tell me ?  
Abide, and hear what I shall you tell,  
And be ruled by my counsel

## PRIDE

Nay, no fellow ne yet mate,  
I trow thy fellow be in Newgate,  
Shall we tell thee whither we go ?  
Nay, i-wis, good John-a-Peepe<sup>1</sup>  
Who learned thee, thou mistaught man,  
To speak so to a gentleman ?  
Though his clothes be never so thin,  
Yet he is come of noble kin,  
Though thou give him such a mock,  
Yet he is come of a noble stock,  
I let thee well to wit

## RIOT

What ! Sir John,<sup>1</sup> what say ye ?  
Would you be fettered now ?

---

<sup>1</sup> [Intended as a sneer at Charity's pious sentiments. *Sir John* is the common term in old plays, and literature generally, for a parson.]

Think not too long, I pray ye ,  
If misfortune come soon enou',  
Ye shall think it a little [too] soon

## YOUTH

Yet, sirs, let this cease,  
And let us talk of goodness

## RIOT

He turneth his tail, he is afeard ,  
But, faith, he shall be scared ,  
He weeneth by flattering to please us again,  
But he laboureth all in vain

## CHARITY.

Sir, I pray you me not spare,  
For nothing I do care  
That ye can do to me

## RIOT

No, whoreson ? sayest thou so ?  
Hold him, Pride, and let me go ,  
I shall set a pair of rings,  
That shall set to his shins,  
And that even anon.

## PRIDE

Hie thee apace and come again,  
And bring with thee a good chain,  
And hold him here still.

## CHARITY

Jesus, that was born of Mary mild,  
 From all evil he us shield,  
 And send you grace to amend,  
 Ere our life be at an end ,  
 For I tell you truly,  
 That ye live full wickedly ,  
 I pray God it amend !

## RIOT

Lo, sirs, look what I bring.  
 Is not this a jolly ringing ?  
 By my troth, I trow it be  
 I will go with Charity  
 How say'st thou, Master Charity ?  
 Doth this gear please thee ?

## CHARITY.

They please me well indeed !  
 The more sorrow, the more need !  
 For God said, while he was a man,  
*Beati qui persecutionem patiuntur propter iustitiam*  
 Unto his apostles he said so,  
 To teach them how they should do

## PRIDE.

We shall see how they can please ,  
 Sit down, sir, and take your ease ,  
 Methink these same were full meet  
 To go about your fair feet

## YOUTH

By my truth, I you tell  
 They would become him very well ,

Therefore hie that they were on,  
Unto the tavern that we were gone

## RIOT

That shall ye see anon,  
How soon they shall be on ,  
And after we will not tarry long,  
But go hence with a meriy song

## PRIDE

Let us begin all at once

## YOUTH

Now have at thee, by Cock's bones,  
And soon let us go !

*[Exeunt Pride, Youth, Riot, and Lechery]*

## CHARITY

Lo, masters, here you may see beforne,  
That the weed overgroweth the corn  
Now may ye see all in this tide,  
How vice is taken, and virtue set aside  
Yonder ye may see youth is unstable,  
But evermore changeable ,  
And the nature of men is fiail,  
That he wotteth not what may avail  
Virtue for to make  
O good Lord, it is a pitiful case,  
Sith God hath lent man wit and grace  
To choose of good and evil,  
That man should voluntarily  
To such things himself apply,  
That his soul should spill

## HUMILITY

Christ that was crucified, and crowned with thorn,  
And of a virgin for man was born,  
Some knowledge send to me  
Of my brother Charity

## CHARITY

Dear brother Humility,  
Ye be welcome unto me ,  
Where have ye be so long ?

## HUMILITY

I shall do you to understand,  
That I have said mine evensong ,  
But, sir, I pray you tell me now,  
How this case happened to you ?

## CHARITY

I shall tell you anon ,  
The fellows that I told you on,  
Have me thus arrayed

## HUMILITY

Sir, I shall undo the bands  
From your feet and your hands  
Sir, I pray you tell me anon  
Whither they be gone,  
And when they come again

## CHARITY

Sir, to the tavern they be gone,  
And they will come again anon,  
And that shall you see.

## HUMILITY

Then will we them exhort  
Unto virtue to resort,  
And to forsake sin

## CHARITY

I will help you that I can  
To convert that wicked man

## YOUTH

Aback ! gallants, and look unto me,  
And take me for your special,  
For I am promoted to high degree,  
By right I am king eternal ,  
Neither duke ne lord, baron ne knight,  
That may be likened unto me,  
They be subdued to me by right,  
As servants to their masters should be

## HUMILITY

Ye be welcome to this place here ,  
We think ye labour all in vain ,  
Wherefore your brains we will stir,  
And keel <sup>1</sup> you a little again

## YOUTH

Sayest thou my brains thou wilt stir,  
I shall lay thee on the ear,  
Were thou born in Trumpington,<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Cool

<sup>2</sup> [Trumpington is in Essex, a county proverbial, rightly or wrongly, for the stupidity of its inhabitants ]

And brought up at Hogsnorton ? <sup>1</sup>  
By my faith it seemeth so ,  
Well, go, knave, go !

## CHARITY

Do by our counsel and our reed,  
And ask mercy for thy misdeed ,  
And endeavour thee, for God's sake,  
For thy sins amends to make  
Ere ever that thou die

## RIOT

Hark, Youth, for God avow,  
He would have thee a saint now ,  
But, Youth, I shall you tell  
A young saint an old devil ,  
Therefore I hold thee a fool,  
And thou follow his school

## YOUTH.

I warrant thee I will not do so ,  
I will be ruled by you two

## PRIDE

Then shall ye do well,  
If ye be ruled by our counsel ,  
We will bring you to high degree,  
And promote you to dignity

---

<sup>1</sup> [Equivalent to calling him a churl. See Hazlitt's "Proverbs," 1869, pp 315 316 and 489, and Halliwell's "Dictionary," v Hogsnorton. But in none of the instances cited there do we find Trumpington mentioned.]



## HUMILITY.

Sir, it is a pitiful case,  
That ye would forsake grace.  
And to vice apply

## YOUTH

Why, knave, doth it grieve thee !  
Thou shalt not answer for me  
When my soul hangeth on the hedge once,  
Then take thou, and cast stones,  
As fast as thou wilt !

## CHARITY

Sir, if it please you to do thus,  
Forsake them and do after us,  
The better shall you do

## RIOT

Sir, he shall do well enou',  
Though he be ruled by neither of you ,  
Therefore crake no longer here,  
Lest you have on the ear,  
And that a good knock.

## PRIDE.

Lightly see thou avoid the place,  
Or I shall give thee on the face  
Youth, I trow that he would  
Make you holy, ere ye be old ,  
And, I swear by the rood,  
It is time enough to be good,  
When that ye be old.

## YOUTH

Sir, by my truth, I thee say  
I will make merry, whiles I may,  
I cannot tell you how long

## PRIDE

Yea, sir, so mot I thrive,  
Thou art not certain of thy life ,  
Therefore thou wert a stark fool  
To leave mirth and follow their school

## HUMILITY

Sir, I shall him exhort  
Unto us to resort,  
And you to forsake

## PRIDE

Ask him if he will do so,  
To forsake us and follow you two ,  
Nay, I warrant you, nay !

## HUMILITY

That shall you see even anon ,  
I will unto him gone,  
And see what he will say

## RIOT

Hardly go on thy way ,  
I know well he will say nay

## YOUTH

Yea, sir, by God that me dear bought,  
Methink ye labour all for nought,  
Weenest thou that I will for thee  
Or thy brother Charity  
Forsake this good company?  
Nay, I warrant you

## PRIDE

No, master, I pray you of that,  
For anything forsake us not,  
And all our counsel rule you by,  
Ye may be emperor, ere ye die

## YOUTH

While I have life in my body,  
Shall I be ruled by Riot and thee

## RIOT

Sir, then, shall ye do well,  
For we be true as steel,  
Sir, I can teach you to play at the dice,  
At the queen's game<sup>1</sup> and at the Irish,<sup>2</sup>  
The treygobet<sup>3</sup> and the hazard<sup>4</sup> also,  
And many other games mo,  
Also at the cards I can teach you to play,  
At the triumph and one-and-thirty,

---

<sup>1</sup> See "Popular Antiquities of Great Britain," II 286

<sup>2</sup> "Popular Antiquities of Great Britain," II 315

<sup>3</sup> Should we not read *Hey go bet*?

<sup>4</sup> See Hazlitt's "Popular Poetry," III 73-4

Post,<sup>1</sup> pinion,<sup>2</sup> and also aums-ace,  
And at another they call dewce-ace ,  
Yet I can tell you more, and ye will con me thank,  
Pink<sup>3</sup> and drink, and also at the blank,<sup>4</sup>  
And many sports mo

## YOUTH.

I thank thee, Riot, so mot I the,  
For the counsel thou hast given me ,  
I will follow thy mind in every thing,  
And gude me after thy learning

## CHARITY

Youth, leave that counsel, for it is nought,  
And amend that thou hast miswrought,  
That thou may'st save that God hath bought

## YOUTH

What say ye, Master Charity ?  
What hath God bought ?  
By my troth, I know not  
Whether he goeth in white or black ,  
He came never at the stews,  
Nor in no place, where I do use ,  
I wis he bought not my cap,

---

<sup>1</sup> *Post and pair*

<sup>2</sup> [We do not find this mentioned elsewhere The same remark applies to *aums ace*]

<sup>3</sup> [Halliwell, in his "Dict" v Pink, says — "A game, the same as post and pair" Surely this is not so It seems rather to be used, here at least, in the sense of *gamble* But *pink*, after all, may signify something very different, viz , *lecherie*]

<sup>4</sup> The target or butts

Nor yet my jolly hat ,  
I wot not what he hath bought for me  
And he bought anything of mine,  
I will give him a quart of wine,  
The next time I him meet

## CHARITY

Sir, this he did for thee ,  
When thou wast bond, he made thee free,  
And bought thee with his blood

## YOUTH

Sir, I pray you tell me,  
How may this be  
That I know, I was never bond  
Unto none in England

## CHARITY

Sir, I shall tell you—  
When Adam had done great trespass,  
And out of Paradise exiled was ,  
Then all the souls, as I can you tell,  
Were in the bondage of the devil of hell,  
Till the Father of heaven, of his great mercy,  
Sent the Second Person in Trinity  
Us for to redeem,  
And so with his precious blood  
He bought us on the rood,  
And our souls did save

## YOUTH

How should I save it, tell me now,  
And I will be ruled after you  
My soul to save

## RIOT.

What, youth , will ye forsake me ?  
I will not forsake thee

## HUMILITY

I shall tell you shortly ,  
Kneel down and ask God mercy,  
For that you have offended

## PRIDE.

Youth, wilt thou do so ?  
Follow them, and let us go ?  
Marry, I trow, nay

## YOUTH

Here all sin I forsake,  
And to God I me betake ,  
Good Lord, I pray thee have no indignation,  
That I, a sinner, should ask salvation

## CHARITY

Now thou must forsake Pride,  
And all Riot set aside

## PRIDE

I will not him forsake,  
Neither early ne late ,  
I ween'd he would not forsake me ,  
But if it will none otherwise be,  
I will go my way

## YOUTH

Sir, I pray God be your speed,  
And help you at your need

## RIOT

I am sure thou wilt not forsake me,  
Nor I will not forsake thee

## YOUTH

I forsake you also,  
And will not have with you to do

## RIOT

And I forsake thee utterly  
Fie on thee, cartiff, fie !  
Once a promise thou did me make,  
That thou would me never forsake,  
But now I see it is hard  
For to trust the wretched world ,  
Farewell, masters, everychone

## HUMILITY

For your sin look ye mourn,  
And evil creatures look ye turn ,  
For your name, who maketh inquisition,  
Say it is Good Contrition  
That for sin doth mourn

## CHARITY

Here is a new array,  
For to walk by the way,  
Your prayer for to say

## HUMILITY

Here be beads<sup>1</sup> for your devotion,  
And keep you from all temptation ,  
Let not vice devour  
When you see misdoing men,  
Good counsel give them,  
And teach them to amend

## YOUTH

For my sin I will mourn,  
All creatures I will turn ,  
And when I see misdoing men,  
Good counsel I shall give them,  
And exhort them to amend

## CHARITY

Then shall ye be an heritor of bliss,  
Where all joy and mirth is

## YOUTH

To the which eternal  
God bring the persons all  
Here being, amen !

## HUMILITY

Thus have we brought our matter to an end  
Before the persons here present ,  
Would every man be content,  
Lest another day we be shent

## CHARITY

We thank all this presence  
Of their meek audience

---

<sup>1</sup> [Copland's ed *books* ]



## HUMILITY

Jesu that sitteth in heaven so high,  
Save all this fair company <sup>1</sup>  
Men and women that here be,  
Amen, amen, for Charity <sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> [This line is omitted in Waley's ed ]

<sup>2</sup> [The colophon of Waley's ed is Imprinted at London  
by John waley, dwellyng in foster lane ]

LUSTY JUVENTUS.

A MORALITY

*An Enterlude called Lusty Iuuentus, lyuely describing the  
frailtie of youth of natur prone to vyce by grace and  
good counsayll traynable to vertue*

*The parsonages that speake*

*Messenger,  
Lusty Iuuentus,  
Good Counsaill,  
Knowledge,  
Sathan the deuyll,*

*Hypocrisie,  
Fellowship,  
Abhominable Lyuyng,  
Gods mercifull promises*

*Foure maye playe it easely, takyng such partes as  
they thinke best so that any one take of those partes that  
be not in place at once*

*[Col] Imprimyted at London, in Lothbury, ouer agaynst  
Saint Margarits Church, by Wylllyam Copland 4<sup>o</sup>, bluck-  
letter <sup>1</sup>*

---

<sup>1</sup> [The colophon of Vele's ed is at the end *in fi â* |

## HAWKINS'S PREFACE.

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THE editor has been favoured with two copies of this moral interlude, one of which is preserved in the library belonging to Lincoln Cathedral,<sup>1</sup> the other is in the possession of Mr Garrick. It was written in the reign of Edward the Sixth by one R. Wever, of whom the editor can give the reader no further information. The former was printed at London by Abraham Vele. The latter is a very different copy from the other. A more obsolete spelling runs through the whole, and it contains great variations besides, which the reader will find at the bottom of each page. The conclusion being imperfect, the printer's colophon is wanting, so that it cannot be known where this edition was printed. According to Dr Percy's tables, it was printed by Richard Pinson.<sup>2</sup>

The design of this interlude was to expose the super-

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<sup>1</sup> [Afterwards parted with to Dr Dibdin. A second copy is in the Bodleian.]

<sup>2</sup> [An error. No edition by Pinson is known, or is likely to have ever existed. The impression referred to is Copland's. See Hazlitt's "Handbook," p. 649-50.]

stitutions of the Romish Church, and to promote the Reformation. The stage (as the learned Dr Peirce observes) in those days literally was what wise men have always wished it—a supplement to the pulpit. Chapter and verse are as formally quoted as in a sermon. See “Prologue of the Messenger,” &c. From this play we learn that most of the young people were new gospellers, or friends to the Reformation, and that the old were tenacious of the doctrines imbibed in their youth, for thus the Devil is introduced lamenting the downfall of superstition—

The old people would believe still in my laws,  
But the younger sort lead them a contrary way,  
They will not believe, they plainly say,  
In old traditions and made by men,  
But they will live as the scripture teacheth them, &c

And in another place Hypocrisy urges—

The world was never merry,  
Since children were so bold,  
Now every boy will be a teacher,  
The father a fool, and the child a preacher

[This is certainly a piece of rather heavy and tedious morality, replete with good instruction, but didactic to a fault. It is deficient in the curious allusions, which abound in other productions of the same kind, and even that mysterious character, *Abominable Irving*, whose introduction promises some amusement and illustration, moves off the scene almost immediately after her first appearance, while *Little Bess*, whose entrance might have been a vehicle for some diverting or sentimental situation, does not “come on” at all.]

## LUSTY JUVENTUS.



### THE PROLOGUE OF THE MESSENGER

FOR as much as man is naturally prone  
To evil from his youth, as Scripture doth recite,<sup>1</sup>  
It is necessary that he be speedily withdrawn  
From concupiscence of sin, his natural appetite  
An<sup>2</sup> order to bring up youth Ecclesiasticus doth  
write,—

An untamed horse will be hard, saith he,  
And a wanton child wilful will be  
Give him no liberty in youth, nor his folly  
excuse,

Bow down his neck, and keep him in good awe,  
Lest he be stubborn no labour refuse  
To train him to wisdom and teach him God's law,  
For youth is frail and easy to draw  
By grace to goodness, by nature to ill  
That nature hath ingrafted, is hard to kill

Nevertheless, in youth men may be best  
Trained to virtue by godly mean,  
Vice may be so mortified and so supprest,

---

<sup>1</sup> Gen viii , Jer xvii , Eccles xxx

<sup>2</sup> And, Copland's edition

That it shall not break furth, yet the root will  
 remain ,  
 As in this interlude by youth you shall see plam,  
 From his lust by Good Counsel brought to godly  
 conversation,  
 And shortly after to frail nature's inclination  
 The enemy of mankind, Satan, through Hypo-  
 crisy  
 Feigned or chosen holiness of man's blind intent,  
 Forsaking<sup>1</sup> God's word, that leadeth right way,  
 Is brought to Fellowship and ungracious company,  
 To Abhominable Living till he be wholly bent,  
 And so to desperation, if good counsel were not  
 sent  
 From God, that in trouble doth no man forsake  
 That doth call, and trust in him for Christ's sake  
 Finally, youth by God's special grace  
 Doth earnestly repent his abhominable living  
 By the doctrine of good counsel, and to his solace  
 God's mercy entereth to him reciting  
 God's merciful promises, as they be in writing  
 He believeth and followeth, to his great consol-  
 ation<sup>2</sup>  
 And these parts ye shall see briefly played in their  
 fashion

*Here entereth LUSTY JUVENTUS, or YOUTH, singing  
 as followeth*

In a herber<sup>3</sup> green, asleep<sup>4</sup> where as I lay,  
 The buds sang sweet in the middes of the day ,  
 I dreamed fast of mirth and play  
 In youth is pleasure, in youth is pleasure

<sup>1</sup> *Forsakyn*, Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> *Consolation*, Vele's edition

<sup>3</sup> *Arbour*, Copland's edition

<sup>4</sup> *Aslope*, Copland's edition

Methought I walked still to and fro,  
 And from her company I could not go,  
 But when I waked, it was not so  
     In youth is pleasure, in youth is pleasure

Therefore my heart is surely pight<sup>1</sup>  
 Of her alone to have a sight,  
 Which is my joy and heart's delight  
     In youth is pleasure, in youth is pleasure

## Finis

LUSTY JUVENTUS, or YOUTH, *speakesh*

What, ho? Are they not here?  
 I am disappointed, by the blessed mass<sup>1</sup>  
 I had thought to have found them making good  
     cheer,  
 But now they are gone to some secret place  
 Well, seeing they are gone, I do not greatly pass,<sup>2</sup>  
 Another time I will hold them as much,  
 Seeing they break<sup>3</sup> promise, and keep not the  
     tweche<sup>4</sup>

What shall I do now to pass away the day?<sup>2</sup>  
 Is there any man here that will go to game?  
 At whatsoever he<sup>5</sup> will play,  
 To make one I am ready to the same  
 Youth full of pleasure is my proper name  
 To be alone is not my appetite,<sup>6</sup>  
 For of all things in the world I love merry com-  
     pany  
 Who knoweth where is e'er a minstrel?

<sup>1</sup> *Surel e pight*, Copland's edition<sup>3</sup> *B,ake*, Copland's edition<sup>5</sup> *I'e* Copland's edition<sup>6</sup> *Appetyte*, Vele's edition<sup>2</sup> Care<sup>4</sup> Touch



By the mass, I would fain go dance a fit<sup>1</sup>  
 My companions<sup>2</sup> are at it, I know right well,  
 They do not all this while in a corner sit  
 Against another time they have taught me<sup>3</sup> wit  
 I beshrew their hearts for serving me this,<sup>4</sup>  
 I will go seek them, whether I hit or miss

*Here entereth GOOD COUNSEL, to whom YOUTH  
 yet speaketh*

Well i-met, father, well i-met  
 Did you hear any minstrels play,  
 As you came hitherward upon your way?  
 And if you did, I pray you wish<sup>5</sup> me thither,  
 For I am going to seek them, and, in faith, I know  
 not whither

#### GOOD COUNSEL

Sir, I will ask you a question by your favour  
 What would you with the minstrel do?

#### JUVENTUS

Nothing but have a dance or two,  
 To pass the time away in pleasure

<sup>1</sup> The word *fite* sometimes signified a part or division of a song, but in its original acceptation a poetic strain, verse, or poem from being applied to music, the word was easily transferred to dancing, as in the above passages. See Dr Percy's "Relics of Anc Eng Poetry," vol II, p 297 [edit 1765] —*Hawkins*

<sup>2</sup> *Compacions*, Copland's edition

<sup>3</sup> *My*, Copland's edition

<sup>5</sup> *Wyse*, Vele's edition

<sup>4</sup> Thus.

## GOOD COUNSEL

If that be the matter, I promise you sure,  
I am the more sorrier that it should so be,  
For there is no such passing the time appointed in  
the Scripture,  
Nor yet thereunto it doth not agree !  
I wish that ye would so use your liberty,  
To walk as you are bound to do,  
According to the vocation which God hath called  
you to

## JUVENTUS

Why, sir, are you angry, because I have spoken so ?  
By the mass, it is alone for my appetite

## GOOD COUNSEL

Show me your name, I pray you heartily,  
And then I will my mind express

## JUVENTUS

My name is called Juventus, doubtless  
Say what you will, I will give you the hearing

## GOOD COUNSEL

For as much as God hath created you of nothing,  
Unto his own likeness by spiritual illumination,  
It is unmeet that ye should lead your living  
Contrary to his godly determination  
Saint Paul unto the Ephesians giveth good exhorta-  
tion,

Saying, walk circumspectly, redeeming the time ,  
That is, to spend it well, and not to wickedness  
incline

## JUVENTUS

No, no, hardly none of mine ,  
If I would live so stiait, you might count me a  
fool ,  
Let them keep those rules, which are doctors  
divine,  
And have be brought up all their days in school

## GOOD COUNSEL

Moses in the law exhorteth his people,  
As in the book of Deuteronomy he doth plainly  
write,  
That they should live obedient and thankful ,  
For in effect <sup>1</sup> these words he doth recite  
All ye this day stand before the Lord's sight,  
Both princes, rulers, elders, and parents,  
Children, wives, young, and old , therefore obey his  
commandments

## JUVENTUS

I am too young to understand his documents ,<sup>2</sup>  
Wherefore did all they stand before his presence ?

## GOOD COUNSEL

To enter with God peace and alliance,  
Promising that they would him honour, fear, and  
serve

---

<sup>1</sup> *For infecte*, Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> Teachings

All kind of people were bound in those covenants,  
That from his law they should never sweive ,  
For God useth no partiality

## JUVENTUS

What, am I bound, as well as the clergy,  
To learn and follow his precepts and law ?

## GOOD COUNSEL

Yea, surely, or else God will withdraw  
His mercy from you, promised in his covenant ,  
For, except you live under his obedience and awe,  
How can you receive the benefits of his Testament ?  
For he that<sup>1</sup> submitteth himself to be a servant,  
And his master's commandment will not fulfil nor  
regard,  
According as he hath done, is worthy his reward

## JUVENTUS

It is as true a saying as ever I heard ,  
Therefore your name, I pray you<sup>2</sup> now tell,  
For, by my truth, your communication I like wonders well

## GOOD COUNSEL

My name is called Good Counsel

## JUVENTUS

Good Counsel ?  
Now, in faith, I cry you mercy

---

<sup>1</sup> *That*, omitted in Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> *You*, omitted in Copland's edition

I am sorry that I have you thus offended ,  
But, I pray you, bear with me patiently,  
And my misbehaviour shall be amended  
I know my time I have rudely spende,  
Following my own lust, being led by ignorance ,  
But now I hope of better knowledge through your  
acquaintance

## GOOD COUNSEL

I pray God guide you with his gracious assistance  
Unto the knowledge of his truth, your ignorance  
to undo,  
That you may be one of those numbered Christians,  
Which followeth the lamb whither he doth go  
The lamb Jesus Christ my meaning is so,  
By sure faith and confidence in his bitter death  
and passion,  
The only price of our health and salvation

## JUVENTUS

Sir, I thank you for your hearty oration  
And now, I pray you, show me your advisement,  
How I may live in this my vocation,  
According to God's will and commandment

## GOOD COUNSEL

First of all, it is most expedient,  
That you exercise yourself in continual prayer,  
That it might please the Lord omnipotent  
To send unto you his holy spirit and comforter,  
Which will lead you every day and hour  
Unto the knowledge of his word and verity,  
Wherein you may learn to live most christianly



## KNOWLEDGE

Now the Lord bless you all with his heavenly  
benediction,  
And with his fiery love your hearts inflame,  
That of his merciful promises you may have the  
fruition,  
The subtlety of the devil utterly to defame  
Now, good Christian audience, I will express my  
name,  
The True Knowledge of God's Verity, this<sup>1</sup> my  
name doth hight,  
Whom God hath appointed to give the blind then  
sight

## GOOD COUNSEL

All praise be given to that Lord of might,  
Which hath appointed you hither at this present  
hour,  
For I trust you will so instruct youth aright,  
That he shall live according to God's pleasure

## JUVENTUS

And I thank Jesus Christ my Saviour,  
That he is come to my company

## KNOWLEDGE

I thank you, my friends, most heartily  
For your gentle salutation

## JUVENTUS

Sir, I will be so bold, by your deliberation,  
To open my mind unto you now,

---

<sup>1</sup> *Thus*, Copland's edition, but the sense is the same

Trusting that, by your good exhortation,  
I shall learn those things which I never knew  
This one thing chiefly I would learn of you,  
How I may my life in this my vocation lead,  
According as God hath ordained and decreed

## KNOWLEDGE

The prophet David saith, that the man is blessed,  
Which doth exercise himself in the law of the  
Lord,  
And doth not follow the way of the wicked,  
As the first psalm doth plainly record <sup>1</sup>  
The fourscore and thuteenth psalm thereunto doth  
accord,  
Blessed is the man whom thou teachest, O Lord  
saith he,  
To learn thy <sup>2</sup> law, precepts, word, or verity  
And Christ in the gospel saith manifestly  
Blessed is he which heareth the Word of God and  
keepeth it,  
That is, to believe his word and live accordingly,  
Declaring the faith by the fruits of the spirit,  
Whose fruits are these, as St Paul to the Galathians  
doth write,  
Love, joy, peace, long suffering, and faithfulness,  
Meekness, goodness, temperance, and gentleness

## GOOD COUNSEL

By <sup>3</sup> these words, which unto you he doth express  
He teacheth that you ought to have a steadfast  
faith,

---

<sup>1</sup> *Accorde*, Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> *The*, Copland's edition

<sup>3</sup> *Be*, Copland's edition



Without the which<sup>1</sup> it is impossible doubtless  
 To please God, as Saint Paul saith  
 Where faith is not, godly living decayeth,  
 For whatsoever is not of faith, saith St Paul, is  
     sin,  
 But where a perfect faith is, there is good working

## JUVENTUS

It seemeth to me, that this is<sup>2</sup> your meaning,  
 That, when I observe God's commandments and  
     the works of charity,  
 They shall prevail unto me nothing,  
 Except I believe to be saved thereby

## KNOWLEDGE

No, no, you are deceived very blindly,  
 For faith in Christ's merits doth only justify,  
 And make us righteous in God's sight

## JUVENTUS

Why should I then in good<sup>3</sup> works delight,  
 Seeing I shall not be saved by them?

## GOOD COUNSEL

Because they are required of all Christian men,  
 As the necessary fruits of true repentance

## KNOWLEDGE

But the reward of the heavenly inheritance  
 Is given us through faith, for Christ's deservings,

<sup>1</sup> *The which*, omitted in Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> *Is*, omitted, Copland's edition

<sup>3</sup> *God*, Vele's edition

As St Paul declareth in the fourth chapter to the  
Romans,  
Therefore we ought not to work as hirelings  
Seeing Christ hath purged us once from all our  
wicked living,  
Let us no more wallow therein,  
But persevere, like good branches, bearing fruit in  
him

## JUVENTUS

Now I know where about you have been  
My elders never taught me so before

## GOOD COUNSEL

Though your elders were blind, doubt not you  
therefore,  
For Saint Peter saith, vain is the conversations  
Which ye receive by your elders' traditions,

## JUVENTUS

I will gladly receive your godly admonitions  
But yet, I pray you, show me the cause  
That they, being men of great discretions,  
Did not instruct me in God's laws,  
According to his will and ordinance

## KNOWLEDGE.

Because they themselves were wrapped in ignorance,  
Being deceived by false preachers

## JUVENTUS

O Lord, deliver me from wicked teachers,  
That I be not deceived with their false doctrine

## GOOD COUNSEL

To God's word you must only incline ,  
All other doctrine clean set apart

## JUVENTUS

Surely that I will from the bottom of my heart ,  
And I thank the living God which hath given me  
the knowledge  
To know his doctrine from the false and pervart,<sup>1</sup>  
I being yet young and full tender of age ,  
And that he hath made me partaker of the heavenly  
inheritage,  
Of his own<sup>2</sup> mercy, and not of my deserving,  
For hell I have deserved by my sinful working  
I know right well, my elders and parents  
Have of a long time deceived be  
With blind hypocrisy and superstitious intents,  
Trusting in their own works, which is nothing but  
vanity ,  
Their steps shall not be followed for me  
Therefore, I pray you, show me a brief conclusion,  
How I ought to live in Christian religion

## KNOWLEDGE

The first beginning of wisdom, as saith the wise  
Solomon,  
Is to fear God with all thy<sup>3</sup> heart and power ,  
And then thou must believe all his promises with-  
out any exception,  
And that he will perform them both constant and  
sure

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<sup>1</sup> *Pervarce*, Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> *One*, Copland's edition

<sup>3</sup> *They*, Copland's edition

And then, because he is thy only Saviour,  
Thou must love him with all thy soul and mind,  
And thy neighbour as thyself, because he hath so  
assigned

## JUVENTUS

To love my neighbour as myself<sup>1</sup> I cannot be so<sup>1</sup>  
kind  
I pray you tell me, what mean you?

## KNOWLEDGE

My meaning is, as Christ saith in the sixth chapter  
of Matthew,<sup>2</sup>  
To do to him as you would be done to

## JUVENTUS

I pray God give me grace so for to do,  
That unto his will I may be obedient

## GOOD COUNSEL

Here you shall receive Christ's testament  
To comfort your conscience, when need shall re-  
quire,  
To learn the contents thereof, see that you be  
diligent,  
The which all Christian men ought to desire,  
For it is the well or fountain most clea,  
Out of the which doth spring sweet consolation  
To all those that<sup>3</sup> thirst after eternal salvation

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<sup>1</sup> *To*, Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> *Chap Math*, Copland's edition

<sup>3</sup> *Which*, Vele's edition

## KNOWLEDGE

Therein shall you find most wholesome preserva-  
tion  
Both in troubles, persecutions, sickness, and ad-  
versity,  
And a sure defence in the time of temptation,  
Against whom the devil cannot prevail with all  
his army  
And, if you persevere therein unfeignedly,  
It will set your heart at such quietness and rest,  
Which cannot<sup>1</sup> never be turned with storms nor  
tempest

## GOOD COUNSEL

With this thing you must neither flatter nor jest,  
But stedfastly believe it every day and hour,  
And let your conversation openly protest,  
That of your heart it is the most precious treasure  
And then your godly example shall other men pro-  
cure  
To learn and exercise the same also  
I pray God strengthen you so for to do

## JUVENTUS

Now for this godly knowledge which you have  
brought me to,  
I beseech the living God reward<sup>2</sup> you again  
From your company I will never depart nor go,  
So long as in this life I do remain,  
For in this book I see manifest and plain,  
That he that followeth his own lusts and imagina-  
tion,

---

<sup>1</sup> *Not*, omitted in Vele's edition

<sup>2</sup> *To reward*, Vele's edition

Keepeth the ready path to everlasting damnation  
And he that leadeth<sup>1</sup> a godly conversation  
Shall be brought<sup>2</sup> to such quietness, joy, and peace,  
Which in comparison passeth all worldly gloriation,  
Which cannot endure, but shortly cease  
Both the time and hour I may now bless,  
That I met with you, father Good Counsel,  
To bring me to the knowledge of this<sup>3</sup> heavenly  
gospel

## KNOWLEDGE

This your profession I like very well,  
So that you intend to live according,  
I pray God, your living do not rebel,  
But ever agree unto your saying,  
That, when ye shall make accounts or reckoning,  
Of this talent which you have received,  
You may be one of those, with whom the Lord  
shall be pleased

## GOOD COUNSEL

For this conversation of Youth the Lord's name be  
praised  
Let us now depart for a season [Exit

## KNOWLEDGE

To give God the glory it is convenient and reason  
If you will depart, I will not tarry [Exit

---

<sup>1</sup> *Leadete*, Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> *Brought*, Copland's edition

<sup>3</sup> *His*, Copland's edition

## JUVENTUS

And I will never forsake your company,  
While I live in this world

[*Exit* <sup>1</sup>*Hence entereth the DEVIL*

O, O, all too late !  
I trow this gear will come to naught ,  
For I perceive my power doth abate,  
For all the policy that ever I have wrought  
Many and sundry ways I have fought,  
To have the Word of God deluded utterly ,  
O for sorrow ! yet it will not be  
I have done the best that I can,  
And my mistress also in every place,  
To root it clean from the heart of man ,  
And yet for all that it flourisheth apace ,  
I am sore in dread to show my face,  
My auctority and works are so greatly despised,  
My inventions, and all that ever I have devised  
O, O, full well I know the cause,  
That my estimation doth thus decay ,  
The old people would believe still in my laws,  
But the younger sort lead them a contrary way  
They will not believe, they plainly say,  
In old traditions and made by men,  
But they will live, as the Scripture teacheth them  
Out, I cry, upon them, they do me open wrong,  
To bring up their children thus in knowledge ,  
For, if they will not follow my ways, when they  
are young,  
It is hard turning them when they come to age  
I must needs find some means this matter to 'suage ,

---

<sup>1</sup> *Exit*, omitted in Copland's edition

I mean, to turn their hearts from the Scripture  
quite,

That in carnal pleasures they may have more  
delight

Well, I will go haste<sup>1</sup> to infect this youth

Through the enticement of my son Hypocrisy,

And work some proper feat to stop his mouth,

That he may lead his life carnally

I had never more need my matters to apply

O my child Hypocrisy, where art thou ?

I charge thee of my blessing appear before me now

[*Here enter eth* HYPOCRISY

#### HYPOCRISY

O, O, quoth he, keep again the sow ,

I come as fast as I can, I warrant you

Where is he that hath the sow to sell ?

I will give him money, if I like her well

Whether it be sow or hog, I do not greatly care,

For by my occupation I am a butcher

#### DEVIL

O my child, how dost thou fare ?

#### HYPOCRISY

*Sancti amen*, who have we there ?

By the mass, I will buy none of thy ware ,

Thou art a chapman for the devil

#### DEVIL

What, my son, canst thou not tell,

Who is here, and what I am ?

I am thine own father Satan

---

<sup>1</sup> Copland's edit *taste*



## HYPOCRISY

Be you so, sir? I cry you mercy then,  
You may say I am homely, and lack learning,  
To liken my father's voice unto a sow's groaning  
But, I pray you, show me the cause and why,  
That you called me hither so hastily?

## DEVIL

Ah, Hypocrisy, I am undone utterly

## HYPOCRISY

Utterly undone! nay, stop there hardily,  
For I myself do know the contrary  
By daily experience  
Do not I yet reign abroad?  
And as long as I am in the world,  
You have some treasure and substance  
I suppose I have been the flower  
In setting forth thy laws and power  
Without any delay  
By the mass, if I had not been,  
Thou haddest not been worth a Flander's pin  
At this present day  
The time were too long now to declare,  
How many and great the number are,  
Which have deceived be,  
And brought clean from God's law  
Unto thy yoke and awe,  
Through the enticement of me  
I have been busied since the world began,  
To graff thy laws in the heart of man,  
Where they ought to be refused  
And I have so mingled God's commandments  
With vain zeals and blind intents,

That they be greatly abused  
I set up great idolatry  
With all<sup>1</sup> kind of filthy sodometry,  
To give mankind a fall  
And I [have] brought up such superstition,  
Under the name of holiness and religion,  
That deceived almost all  
As holy cardinals, holy popes,  
Holy vestments, holy copes,  
Holy hermits and friars,  
Holy priests, holy bishops,  
Holy monks, holy abbots,  
Yea, and all obstinate<sup>2</sup> liars  
Holy pardons, holy beads,  
Holy saints, holy images,  
With holy, holy blood,  
Holy stocks, holy stones,  
Holy clouts, holy<sup>3</sup> bones,  
Yea, and holy holy wood  
Holy skins, holy bulls,  
Holy rochets and cowls  
Holy crouches and staves,  
Holy hoods, holy caps,  
Holy mitres, holy hats,  
Ah good holy holy knaves  
Holy days, holy fastings,  
Holy twitching, holy tastings,  
Holy visions and sights,  
Holy wax, holy lead,  
Holy water, holy bread,  
To drive away spirits  
Holy fire, holy palm,  
Holy oil, holy cream,

---

<sup>1</sup> *A*, Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> *Abstimate*, Copland's edition

<sup>3</sup> *Hole*, Copland's edition

And holy ashes also ,  
Holy brooches, holy rings,  
Holy kneeling, holy censings,  
And a hundied trim-trams mo  
Holy crosses, holy bells,  
Holy relics, holy jewels,  
Of mine own invention ,  
Holy candles, holy tapers,  
Holy parchments, holy papeis  
Had not you a holy son ?

## DEVIL

All these things, which thou hast done,  
My honour and laws hath maintained ,  
But now, O alas ! one thing is begun,<sup>1</sup>  
By the which my kingdom is greatly decayed ,  
I shall lese all, I am soie afraid  
Except thy help, I know right plain,  
I shall never be able to recover it again  
God's Word is so greatly sprung up in youth,  
That he little regardeth my laws oi me ,  
He telleth his parents that is very truth,  
That they of long time have deceived be  
He saith according to Christ's verity  
All his doings he will order and frame,  
Mortifying the flesh with the lusts of the same

## HYPOCRISY

Ah, sirrah, there beginneth the game  
What, is Juventus become so tame,  
To be a New Gospeller ?

---

<sup>1</sup> *Begone*, Copland's edition

## DEVIL

As fast as I do make, he doth mar,  
He hath<sup>1</sup> followed so long the steps of Good  
Counsel,  
That Knowledge and he together doth dwell,  
For who is so busy in every place as youth,  
To read and declare the manifest truth?  
But, O Hypocrisy, if thou could stop his mouth,  
Thou shouldst win my heart for ever

## HYPOCRISY

What would you have me to do in the matter?  
Show me therein your advisement

## DEVIL

I would have thee go incontinent,  
And work some crafty<sup>2</sup> feat or policy,  
To set Knowledge and him at controversy,  
And his company thyself greatly use,  
That God's Word he may clean abuse

## HYPOCRISY

At your request I will not refuse  
To do that thing, which in me doth lie  
Doubt ye not, but I will excuse  
Those things, which he doth plainly deny,  
And I will handle my matters so craftily,  
That, ere he cometh to man's state,  
God's Word and his living shall be clean at the  
bate

---

<sup>1</sup> *That*, Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> *Craft*, Vele's edition

## DEVIL

Thou shalt have my blessing both early and late ,  
And, because thou shalt all my counsel keep,  
Thou shalt call thy<sup>1</sup> name Friendship

## HYPOCRISY

By the mass, it is a name full meet  
For my proper and amiable person

## DEVIL

O, farewell, farewell, my son ,  
Speed thy business, for I must be gone      [*Exit* <sup>2</sup>

## HYPOCRISY

I warrant you, let me alone  
I will be with Juventus anon,  
And that, ere he be ware ,  
And, i-wis, if he walk not straight,  
I will use such a sleight,  
That shall trap him in a snare  
How shall I bring this gear to pass ?  
I can tell now, by the mass,  
Without any more advisement  
I will infect him with wicked company,  
Whose conversation shall be so fleshly,  
Yea, able to overcome an innocent  
This wicked Fellowship  
Shall him company keep  
For a while  
And then I will bring in

---

<sup>1</sup> *My*, Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> *Exit* omitted in Copland's edition

Abhominable <sup>1</sup> Living,  
 Him to beguile  
 With words fair I will him 'tice,  
 Telling him of a girl nice,  
 Which shall him somewhat move ,  
 Abhominable Living though she be,  
 Yet he shall no other ways see,  
 But she is for to love  
 She shall him procure  
 To live in pleasure,  
 After his own phantasy ,  
 And my matter to frame,  
 I will call her name  
 Unknowen Honesty  
 This <sup>2</sup> will I convey  
 My matter, I say,  
 Somewhat handsomely ,  
 That, through wicked Fellowship  
 And false pretended Friendship,  
 Youth shall live carnally  
 Trudge, Hypocrisy, trudge '  
 Thou art a good drudge,  
 To seive the devil  
 If thou shouldest he and lulk,  
 And not intend thy work,  
 Thy master should do full evil

---

<sup>1</sup> Abhominable So the word is constantly spelt It is worth remarking, in order to fix the adjustment of a passage in Shakespeare's "Love's Labour's Lost," A 4, S 1 This is abhominable which he would call abominable Capell's edition, nearly agreeable to the quartos, or, this is abominable which we would call abhominable So Theobald and Hanmer, according to the folios The two great and learned editors, Warburton and Johnson, read *vice versa* This is abominable which he would call abhominable, which destroys the poet's humour, such as it is, who is laughing at such fanatical phantasms and rackers of orthography as affect to speak fine — *Hawkins*

<sup>2</sup> Thus

*Here entereth YOUTH, to whom HYPOCRISY  
yet speaketh*

What, Master Youth ?  
Well i-met, by my truth ,  
And whither away ?  
You are the last man,  
Which I talked <sup>1</sup> on,  
I swear, by this day  
Methought by your face,  
Ere you came in place,  
It should be you  
Therefore I did abide  
Here in this tide <sup>2</sup>  
For your coming, this is true

#### JUVENTUS

For your gentleness, sir, most heartily I thank you,  
But yet you must hold me somewhat excused ,  
For to my simple knowledge I never knew,  
That you and I together were acquainted  
But nevertheless, if you do it renew,  
Old acquaintance will soon <sup>3</sup> be remembered

#### HYPOCRISY

Ah, now I see well, Youth is feathered,  
And his crumbs he hath well gathered,  
Since I spake with him last ,  
A poor man's tale cannot now be heard,  
As in times past  
I cry you mercy, I was somewhat bold,  
Thinking that you mastership would

---

<sup>1</sup> *Called*, Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> *Here in this tide* omitted, Copland's edition

<sup>3</sup> *Some*, Copland's edition

Not have been so strange ,  
But now I perceive, that promotion  
Causeth <sup>1</sup> both man, manners, and fashion  
Greatly for to change

## JUVENTUS

You are to blame this <sup>2</sup> me to challenge ,  
For I think I am not he, which you take me for

## HYPOCRISY

Yes, I have known you ever since you were bore  
Your age is yet under a score,  
Which I can well remember  
I-wis, i-wis, you and I  
Many a time have been full merry,  
When you were young and tender

## JUVENTUS

Then, I pray you, let us reason no lenger ,  
But first show your nomination

## HYPOCRISY

Of my name to make declaration  
Without any dissimulation,  
I am called Friendship  
Although I be simple and rude of fashion,  
Yet by lineage and generation  
I am nigh kin to your mastership

---

<sup>1</sup> *Causeth*, Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> *Thus*

<sup>3</sup> *You*, omitted in Copland's edition



## JUVENIUS

What, Friendship?  
I am glad to see that you be merry,  
By my truth, I had almost you forgot,  
By long absence brought out of memory

## HYPOCRISY

By the mass, I love you so heartily,  
That there is none so welcome to my company  
I pray you, tell me whither are you going?

## JUVENTUS

My intention is, to go hear a preaching

## HYPOCRISY

A preaching, quod-a? ah, good little one!  
By Christ, she will make you cry out of the  
    winning,  
If you follow her instruction so early in the morning

## JUVENTUS

Full great<sup>1</sup> I do abhor this your wicked saying,  
For, no doubt, they increase much sin and vice  
Therefore I pray you, show not your meaning,  
For I delight not in such foolish fantasies

## HYPOCRISY

Surely, then you are the more unwise  
You may have a spurt amongst them now and  
    then,  
Why should not you, as well as other men?

---

<sup>1</sup> Greatly

## JUVENTUS

As for those filthy doings<sup>1</sup> I utterly detest them,  
I will hear no more of your wicked communication

## HYPOCRISY

If I may be so bold by your deliberation,  
What will you do at a preaching?

## JUVENTUS

Learn some wholesome and godly teaching  
Of the true minister of Christ's gospel

## HYPOCRISY

Tush, what he will say, I know right well,  
He will say that God is a good man,<sup>2</sup>  
He can make him no better, and say the best he  
can

## JUVENTUS

I know that, but what then?  
The more that God's Word is preached and taught,

<sup>1</sup> *As for al those fylthe doynqcs*, Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> Shakespeare puts these words, with great humour into the mouth of Dogberry, in "Much ado about Nothing," A 3 S 8 Though the quartos and folios concur in this reading, the moderns uniformly read, *He is a good man* N B — The old reading is restored by M<sup>1</sup> Capell

The author seems here to ridicule the blasphemous questions discussed by the schoolmen among the Papists in his time, as, Whether the Pope be God or man, or a mean betwixt both? &c See Archbishop Whitgift's "Sermon before Queen Elizabeth" 1574 Sig B 2—*Haulms* [In Germany they have a similar saying at present, and it seems to be used in this sense God is a good person, he lets things take their course]

The greater the occasion is to all Christian men  
 To forsake their sinful livings, both wicked, vile  
     and naught  
 And to repent their former evils, which they have  
     wrought,  
 Trusting by Christ's death to be redeemed  
 And he that this doth shall never be deceived

## HYPOCRISY

Well said, master doctor, well said !  
 By the mass, we must have you into the pulpit  
 I pray you be remembered, and cover your head  
 For indeed you have need to keep in your wit  
 Ah, sirrah, who would have thought it,  
 That youth had been such a well-learned man !  
 Let me see your portous,<sup>1</sup> gentle Sir John !

## JUVENTUS

No, it is not a book for you <sup>2</sup> to look on,  
 You ought not to jest with God's Testament

## HYPOCRISY

What, man ? I pray you be content ,  
 For I do nothing else, but say my phantasy  
 But yet, if you would do after my advisement,  
 In that matter you should not be so busy ,  
 Was not your father as well-learned as ye ?  
 And if he had said then as you have now done,  
 I-wis he had been like to make a buin

<sup>1</sup> Portous, the ancient name for a Breviary *Blount*  
 Here it signifies the Bible—*Hawkins*

<sup>2</sup> You omitted, Copland's edition

## JUVENTUS

It were much better for me than to return  
From my faith in Christ and the profession of his  
word

## HYPOCRISY

Whether is better a halter or a cord,  
I cannot tell, I swear by God's mother  
But I think<sup>1</sup> you will have the one or the other  
Will you lose all your friends' good will,  
To continue in that opinion still?  
Was there not as well-learned men before as  
now?  
Yea, and better too, I may say to you?  
And they taught<sup>2</sup> the younger sort of people  
By the elders to take an example  
And if I did not love you, as nature doth me  
blind,  
You should not know so much of my mind

## JUVENTUS

Whether were<sup>3</sup> I better to be ignorant and blind,  
And to be damned in hell for infidelity,  
Or to learn godly knowledge, wherein I shall find  
The right path-way to eternal felicity?

## HYPOCRISY

Can you deny, but it is your duty  
Unto your elders to be obedient?

---

<sup>1</sup> *Thynge*, Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> *Thought*, Copland's edition

<sup>3</sup> *Where*, Vele's edition

## JUVENTUS

I grant I am bound to obey my parents  
In all things honest and lawful

## HYPOCRISY

Lawful, quod-a? ah, fool, fool!  
Wilt<sup>1</sup> thou set men to school,  
When they be old?  
I may say to you secretly,  
The world was never merry,  
Since children were so bold  
Now every boy will be a teacher,  
The father a fool, and the child a preacher,  
This is pretty gear  
The foul presumption<sup>2</sup> of youth  
Will turn shortly to great ruth,  
I fear, I fear, I fear

## JUVENTUS

The sermon will be done, ere I can come there  
I care not greatly whether I go or no,  
And yet for my promise, by God I swear,  
There is no remedy but I must needs go  
Of my companions there will be mo,  
And I promised them, by God's grace,  
To meet them there as the sermon was

## HYPOCRISY

For once breaking promise do not you pass,  
Make some excuse the matter to cease,

---

<sup>1</sup> *Wilt*, Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> *The foole presumptuous*, Copland's edition

What have they to do ?  
And you and I were, I wot<sup>1</sup> where,  
We would be as merry as there,  
Yea, and merrier too

## JUVENTUS

I would gladly in your company go ,  
But, if my companions should chance to see,  
They would report full evil by me  
And peradventure, if I should<sup>2</sup> it use,  
My company they would clean refuse

## HYPOCRISY

What, are those fellows so curious,  
That yourself you cannot excuse ?  
I will teach you the matter to convey ,  
Do what your own lust, and say as they say ,  
And if you be reproved with your own affinity,  
Bid them pluck the beam out of their own eye  
The old popish priests mock and despise,  
And the ignorant people, that believe their lies,  
Call them papists, hypocrites, and joining of the  
    plough ,  
Face<sup>3</sup> out the matter, and then good enough !  
Let your book at your girdle be tied,  
Or else in your bosom that he may be spied ,  
And then it will be said both with youth and age,  
Yonder fellow hath an excellent knowledge  
Tush, tush !  
I could so beat<sup>4</sup> the bush,

---

<sup>1</sup> *I note wote where*, Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> *Would*, Copland's edition

<sup>3</sup> *Fare*, Copland's edition

<sup>4</sup> *Beare*, Copland's edition

That all should be flush,  
That ever I did

## JUVENTUS

Now, by my truth, you are merrily disposed,  
Let us go thither as you think best

## HYPOCRISY

How say you<sup>2</sup> shall we go to breakfast?  
Will you go to the pie-feast?  
Or, by the mass, if thou wilt be my guest,  
It shall cost thee nothing,  
I have a furny card in a place,  
That will bear a turn besides the ace,  
She purveys now apace  
For my coming  
And if thou wilt sibber<sup>1</sup> as well as I,  
We shall have merry company  
And I warrant thee, if we have not a pie,  
We shall have a pudding

## JUVENTUS

By the mass, that meat I love above all thing,  
You may draw me about the town with a pudding<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Jybben*, Vele's edition

<sup>2</sup> This passage will receive illustration from the following quotation out of Bishop Latimer's Sermon, preached before King Edward the Sixth, about the year 1550 "A good fellow on a tyme bad another of hys frendes to a breakefast, and sayed, Yf you wyl come, you shal be welcome, but I tell you afore hande, you shal haue but sclender fare, one dysh and that is al What is that, said he? A puddynge and nothyng els Mary, sayed he, you cannot please me better, of all meates that is for myne owne toth you may draw me round about the town with a pudding" Sig G vii  
—*Hawkins*

## HYPOCRISY

Then you shall see my cunning  
 A poor shift for a living  
 Amongst poor men used is ,  
 The kind heart of hers  
 Hath eased my purse,  
 Many a time eie this [*Here entereth* FELLOWSHIP

## FELLOWSHIP

I marvel greatly where Friendship is ,  
 He promised to meet me here ere this time  
 I beshrew his heart, that his <sup>1</sup> promise doth miss ,  
 And then be ye sure, it shall not be mine

## HYPOCRISY

Yes, Fellowship, that it shall be thine,  
 For I have tarried here this hour or twain  
 And this honest gentleman in my company hath  
     been,  
 To abide your coming, this thing is plain

## FELLOWSHIP

By the mass, if you chide, I will <sup>2</sup> be gone agan ,  
 For in faith, Friendship, I may say to thee,  
 I love not to be there, where chiders be

## HYPOCRISY

No, God it knoweth, you are so full of honesty,  
 As a may-bone is full of honey

<sup>1</sup> *Thys*, Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> *Wyllt*, Vele's edition



But, sirrah, I pray you, bid this gentleman wel  
 come,  
 For he is desirous in your company to come  
 I tell you he is a man of the right making,  
 And one that hath excellent learning,  
 At his girdle he hath such a book,  
 That the Popish priests dare not in him look  
 This is a fellow for the nonce

## FELLOWSHIP

I love him the better, by God's<sup>1</sup> precious bones  
 You are heartily welcome, as I may say,  
 I shall desire you of better acquaintance,<sup>2</sup>  
 That of your company be bold I may,  
 You may be sure, if in me it lie  
 To do you pleasure, you should it find  
 For, by the mass, I love you both with heart and  
 mind

## JUVENTUS

To say the same to you your gentleness doth me  
 bind,  
 And I thank you heartily for your kindness

## HYPOCRISY

Well<sup>3</sup> you see this gentleman fines<sup>4</sup>  
 Your gentleness and your kindness,  
 I thank him, and I thank you,

<sup>1</sup> *Dogs*, Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> This mode of expression occurs in Shakespeare's "Mid summer Night's Dream," A 3, S 3, needlessly altered by some to, I shall desire of you more acquaintance — *Hawkins*

<sup>3</sup> Original, *wyl*

<sup>4</sup> Query, *defines*

And I think, if the truth were sought,<sup>1</sup>  
The one bad and the other naught,  
Never a good, I make God a vow!  
But yet, Fellowship, tell me one thing,  
Did you see little Bess this morning?<sup>2</sup>  
We should have our breakfast yesternight, she said  
But she hath forgotten it now, I am afraid

## FELLOWSHIP

Her promise shall be performed and paid,  
For I spake with her, since the time I rose,  
And then she told me how the matter goeth  
We must be with her between eight and nine,  
And then her master and mistress will be at the  
preaching

## JUVENTUS

I purposed myself there to have been,  
But this man provoked me to the contrary,  
And told me that we should have merry company

## FELLOWSHIP

Merr, quod-a? we cannot choose but be merry,  
For there is such a girl where as we go,  
Which will make us to<sup>2</sup> be merry, whether we  
will or no

## HYPOCRISY

The ground is the better on the which she doth go  
For she will make better cheer with that<sup>3</sup> little  
which she can get,

---

<sup>1</sup> *Was ysought*, Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> *To* omitted, Copland's edition

<sup>3</sup> *A*, Copland's edition

Than many a<sup>1</sup> one can with a great banquet of  
meat

## JUVENIUS

To be in her company my heart is set ,  
Therefore, I pray you, let us be gone

## FELLOWSHIP

She will come for us <sup>2</sup> herself anon ,  
For I told her before, where we would stand,  
And then, she said, she would beck us with her  
hand

## JUVENIUS

Now, by the mass, I perceive that she is a gallant  
What, will she take pains to come for us hither ?

## HYPOCRISY

Yea, I warrant you , therefore you must be familiar  
with her  
When she cometh in place,  
You must her embrace  
Somewhat handsomely ,  
Lest she think it <sup>3</sup> danger,  
Because you are a stranger,  
To come in your company

## JUVENIUS

Yea,<sup>4</sup> by God's foot, that I will be busy,

---

<sup>1</sup> A omitted, Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> For us omitted, Copland's edition

<sup>3</sup> She thinketh danger, Copland's edition

<sup>4</sup> These two lines I have given to Juvenus against the  
authority of the copies,—*Haukins*

And I may say to you, I can play the knave  
secretly [*Here enter eth* ABHOMINABLE LIVING <sup>1</sup>

## ABHOMINABLE LIVING

Hem ! come away quickly,  
The back doo is open ,<sup>2</sup> I dare not tarry  
Come, Fellowship, come on away !

## HYPOCRISY

What, Unknown Honesty ? a word !  
[*Draws A L aside* <sup>3</sup>  
You shall not go yet, by God I swear ,  
Here is none but your friends, you need not to  
fray,  
Although this strange young gentleman be here

## JUVENTUS

I trust, in me she will think no danger ,  
For I love well the company of fau women

## ABHOMINABLE LIVING

Who, you ? nay, ye are such a holy man,  
That to touch one ye dare not be bold ,  
I think,<sup>4</sup> you would not kiss a young woman,  
If one would give you twenty pound in gold

<sup>1</sup> The entrance of Abhominable Living is not marked in the copies —*Hawkins*

<sup>2</sup> *Opned*, Copland's edition

<sup>3</sup> [This is not marked in the copies ]

<sup>4</sup> *Thyng*, Copland's edition

## JUVENIUS

Yes, by the mass, that I would ,  
I could find in my heart to kiss you in your smock

## ABHOMINABLE LIVING

My back is broad enough to bear away that mock ,  
For one hath told me many a time,  
That you<sup>1</sup> have said you would use no such wanton's  
company as mine

## JUVENTUS

By dog's<sup>2</sup> precious wounds, that was some whole-  
son<sup>3</sup> villain ,  
I will never eat meat that shall do me good,  
Till I have cut his flesh, by God's precious blood  
Tell me, I pray you, who it was,  
And I will trim the knave, by the blessed mass

## ABHOMINABLE LIVING

Tush ! as for that, do not you pass ,  
That which I told you was but for love

## HYPOCRISY

She did nothing else but prove,  
Whether a little<sup>4</sup> thing would you move  
To be angry and fret ,  
What, and if one had said so ?

<sup>1</sup> *Iou*, Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> Both the copies concur in this reading — *Hawkins* [A common corruption of the Divine name]

<sup>3</sup> *Horson*, Copland's edition

<sup>4</sup> *Iule*, Vele's edition

Let such trifling matters go,  
And be good to men's flesh for all that

JUVENTUS [*He kisseth* ABHOMINABLE LIVING ]

To kiss her since she came, I had clean forgot  
You are welcome to my company

ABHOMINABLE LIVING

Sir, I thank you most heartily,  
By your kindness it doth appear

HYPOCRISY

What a hurly-burly is here !  
Smick smack, and all this gear !  
You will to tick-tack,<sup>1</sup> I fear,  
If you <sup>2</sup> had time  
Well, wanton, well,  
I-wis, I can tell,  
That such smock-smell  
Will set your nose out of tune

ABHOMINABLE LIVING

What, man ? you need not to fume,  
Seeing he is come into my company now,  
He is as well welcome as the best of you  
And if it lie in me to do him pleasure,  
He shall have it, you may ye sure

FELLOWSHIP

Then old acquaintance is clean out of favour

---

<sup>1</sup> *Take*, Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> *Thou*, Copland's edition

Lo, Friendship, this gear goeth with a sleight,<sup>1</sup>  
 He hath driven us twain out of concert

## HYPOCRISY

Out of concert, quod-a<sup>2</sup> no, no,  
 I dare well say, she thinketh not so  
 How say you, Unknown Honesty<sup>2</sup>  
 Do not you love Fellowship and me<sup>2</sup>

## ABHOMINABLE LIVING

Yea, by the mass, I love you all thiee,  
 But yet indeed, if I should say the truth,  
 Amongst all other, welcome Master Youth

## JUVENTUS

Full greatly I do delight to kiss your pleasant  
 mouth [He kisseth ABHOMINABLE LIVING  
 I am not able your kindness to recompence,  
 I long to talk with you secretly, therefore let us  
 go hence

## ABHOMINABLE LIVING

I agree to that, for I would not for twenty pence,<sup>2</sup>  
 That it were known where I have been

## HYPOCRISY

What, and it were known<sup>2</sup> it is no deadly<sup>3</sup> sin  
 As for my part, I do not greatly care,  
 So that they find not your proper buttocks bare

<sup>1</sup> *Afsleight*, Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> This and the following line is given to Juventus in Copland's edition —*Hawkins*

<sup>3</sup> *It were no daly*, Copland's edition

## ABHOMINABLE LIVING

Now much fie upon you ! how bawdy<sup>1</sup> you are !  
I-wis, Friendship, it mought<sup>2</sup> have been spoken at  
twice

What think you, for your saying that the people  
will surmise ?

## JUVENTUS

Who dare be so bold us to despise ?  
And if I may hear a knave speak one word,  
I will run thorough his cheeks with my sword

## FELLOWSHIP

This is an earnest fellow, of God's Word !  
See, I pray you, how he is disposed to fight !

## JUVENTUS

Why should I not, and if my cause be right ?  
What, and if a knave do me beguile,  
Shall I stand crouching like an owl ?  
No, no then you might count me a very cow ,  
I know what belongeth to God's law as well as you

## ABHOMINABLE LIVING

Your wit therein greatly I do allow ,  
For, and if I were a man, as you are,  
I would not stick to give a blow,  
To teach other knaves to beware,  
I beshrew you twice, and if you do spare,  
But lay load on the flesh, whatsoever befall,  
You have strength enough to do it with all

---

<sup>1</sup> *Badly*, Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> *Mouth*, Copland's edition



## FELLOWSHIP

Let us depart, and if that we shall ,  
Come on, masters, we twain will go before

## JUVENTUS

Nay, nay, my friend, stop there ,  
It is not you, that shall have her away,  
She shall go with me, and if she go to-day—

## HYPOCRISY

She shall go with none of you, I dare well say

## ABHOMINABLE LIVING

To forsake any of your company I would be very  
loth ,  
Therefore I will follow you all three

## HYPOCRISY

Now I beshrew his heart, that to that will not  
agree ,  
But yet because the time shall not seem very  
long,  
Ere we depart, let us have a merry song

*They sing as followeth*

Why should not youth fulfil his own mind,  
As the course of nature doth him bind ?  
Is not everything ordained to do his kind ?  
*Report me to you, report me to you*



Which should be among the professors<sup>1</sup> of thy  
word !

O, where may a man find now one faithful con-  
gregation,<sup>2</sup>

That is not infected with dissension or discord ?

Or amongst whom are all vices utterly abhorred !<sup>3</sup>

O, where is the brotherly love between man and  
man !

We may lament the time our vice began

O, where is the peace and meekness, long suffering  
and temperance,

Which are the fruits of God's holy spirit ?

With whom is the flesh brought under obedience,

Or who readeth the scripture with intent to follow  
it ?

Who useth not now covetousness and deceit ?

Who giveth unto the poor that which is due ?

I think, in this world few that live now

O, where is the godly example, that parents should  
give

Unto their young family by godly and virtuous  
living ?

Alas ! how wickedly<sup>4</sup> do they themselves live,  
Without any fear of God or his righteous threaten-  
ing !

They have no respect unto the dreadful reckoning,  
Which shall be required of us, when the Lord shall  
come,

As a rightful judge at the day of doom

O, what a joyful sight was it for to see,

When Youth began God's word to embrace ?

Then he promised Godly Knowledge and me,

---

<sup>1</sup> Both the copies read *professour* — *Hawkins*

<sup>2</sup> *Congregation* omitted, Copland's edition

<sup>3</sup> *Abhorred utterly*, Copland's edition

<sup>4</sup> *Wicked*, Copland's edition

That from our instruction he would never turn his  
face,  
But now he walketh, alas ! in the ungodly's chase !  
Heaping sin upon sin, vice upon vice  
[*Here entereth* JUVENTUS  
He that liveth most ungodly is counted most wise—

**JUVENTUS**

Who is here playing at the dice?  
I heard one speak of cinque<sup>1</sup> and sice,<sup>2</sup>  
His words did me entice  
Hither to come

## GOOD COUNSEL

Ah, Youth, Youth, whither dost thou run ?  
Greatly I do bewail thy miserable estate,  
The terrible plagues, which in God's law are written,  
Hang over thy head both early and late  
O fleshly Capernite, stubborn and obstinate  
Thou hadst never forsake Christ, thy Saviour and  
King,  
Than thy fleshly swinish lusts and abominable  
living

JUVENTUS

What, old whoreson, art thou a-chiding?  
I will play a spurt, why should I not?  
I set not<sup>3</sup> a mite by thy checking

<sup>1</sup> Juvenis coming in and hearing imperfectly the words *in* and *vice*, very naturally mistakes them for terms used at dice we may presume, therefore, that the genuine reading should be *cinqve and sice* — *Hawkins*

<sup>2</sup> *Cyze*, Copland's edition

<sup>3</sup> Not omitted, Copland's edition

What hast thou to do, and if I lose my coat?  
I will trill the bones, while I have one groat,  
And, when there is no more ink in the pen,<sup>1</sup>  
I will make a shift,<sup>2</sup> as well as other men

## GOOD COUNSEL

Then I perceive you have forgotten clean  
The promise, that you made unto Knowledge and  
me  
You said such fleshly fruits should not be seen,  
But to God's word your life should agree  
Full true be the words of the prophet Hose,  
No verity nor knowledge of God is now in the  
land,  
But abominable vices hath gotten the upper  
hand

## JUVENTUS

Your mind therein I do well understand  
You go about my living to despise,  
But you will not see the beams in your own eyes

## GOOD COUNSEL

The devil hath you deceived, which is the author  
of lies,  
And trapped<sup>3</sup> you in his snare of wicked Hypo-  
cisy,  
Therefore all that ever you do devise,  
Is to maintain your fleshly liberty

---

<sup>1</sup> [An indelicate figure, which occurs in jest books and other early literature]

<sup>2</sup> *Shyfe*, Copland's edition

<sup>3</sup> *Trape*, Copland's edition

## JUVENTUS

I marvel, why you do this<sup>1</sup> reprove me,  
Wherein do I my life abuse?

## GOOD COUNSEL

Your whole conversation I may well accuse,  
As in my conscience just occasion I find,  
Therefore be not offended although I express my  
mind

## JUVENTUS

By the mass, if thou tell not truth, I will not be  
behind  
To touch you as well again

## GOOD COUNSEL

For this thing most chiefly I do complain<sup>2</sup>  
Have you not professed the knowledge of Christ's  
gospel?  
And yet, I think, no more ungodliness doth reign  
In any wicked heathen, Turk, or infidel,  
Who can devise that sin or evil,  
That you practise not from day to day?  
Yea, and count it nothing but a jest or a play  
Alas! what wantonness remaineth in your flesh!  
How desirous are you to accomplish your own will!  
What pleasure and delight have you in wickedness?  
How diligent are you your lusts to fulfil!  
St Paul saith, that you ought your fleshly lusts to  
kill  
But unto his teaching your life ye will not frame  
Therefore in vain you bear a Christian name

---

<sup>1</sup> Thus

<sup>2</sup> *Complaye*, Copland's edition

Read the Five to the Galatians, and there you  
shall see,  
That the flesh rebelleth against the spirit,  
And that your own flesh is your<sup>1</sup> most utter<sup>2</sup>  
enemy,  
If in your soul's health you do delight  
The time were too long now to recite,  
What whoredom, uncleanness, and filthy com-  
munication  
Is dispersed with youth in every congregation  
To speak of pride, envy, and abominable oaths,  
They are the common practices of youth,  
To advance your flesh, you cut and jag your clothes,  
And yet ye are a great gospeller in the mouth  
What shall I say for this blaspheming<sup>3</sup> the truth?  
I will show you what St Paul doth declare  
In his Epistle to the Hebrews and the tenth  
chapter  
For him, saith he, which doth willingly sin or  
consent,  
After he hath received the knowledge of the  
verity,  
Remaineth no more sacrifice, but a fearful looking  
for judgment,  
And a terrible<sup>4</sup> fire, which shall consume the adver-  
sary,  
And Christ saith that this blasphemy  
Shall never be pardoned nor forgiven  
In this world, nor in the world to come

JUVENTUS [*He lieth down*]

Alas, alas! what have I wrought and done!

---

<sup>1</sup> *Our*, Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> *Veter*, Copland's edition

<sup>3</sup> *Plasphemying*, Copland's edition

<sup>4</sup> *Terrible*, Copland's edition

Here in this place I will fall down desperate ,  
To ask for mercy now, I know, it is too late  
Alas, alas ! that ever I was begat !  
I would to God I had never been born !  
All faithful men, that behold this <sup>1</sup> wretched state,  
May very justly laugh me to scorn ,  
They may say, my time I have evil spent and  
worn,  
Thus in my first age to work my own destruction  
In the eternal pains is my part and portion

## GOOD COUNSEL

Why, Youth, art thou fallen into desperation ?  
What, man, pluck up thine heart, and rise,  
Although thou see nothing now but thy condemna-  
tion,  
Yet it may please God again to open thy eyes  
Ah, wretched creature, what doest thou surmise ?  
Thinkest not that God's mercy doth exceed thy sin ?  
Remember his Merciful Promises, and comfort thy-  
self in him

## JUVENTUS

O sir, this state is so miserable, the which I lie in  
That my comfort and hope from me is separated  
I would to God I had never been !  
Woe worth the time, that ever I was created !

## GOOD COUNSEL

Ah, frail <sup>2</sup> vessel, unfaithful and faint-hearted,  
Doest thou think that God is so merciless,  
That when the sinner doth repent, and is converted,  
That he will not fulfil his merciful promises ?

---

<sup>1</sup> *H's*, Vele's edition

<sup>2</sup> *Fau*, Copland's ed



## JUVENTUS

Alas, sir ! I am in such heaviness,  
That his promises I cannot remember

## GOOD COUNSEL

In thy wickedness continue no lenger ,  
But trust in the Lord without any fea,  
And his Merciful Promises shall shortly appea

## JUVENTUS

I would believe, if I might them hea,  
With all my heart, power and mind

## GOOD COUNSEL

The living God hath him hither assigned  
Lo, where he cometh even here by,  
Therefore mark his sayings diligently  
[*Here entereth* GOD'S MERCIFUL PROMISES  
The Lord, by his prophet Ezekiel, saith in this  
wise plainly,  
As in the thirty-third chapter it doth appear  
Be converted, O ye children, and turn unto me,  
And I shall remedy the cause of your departure ,  
And also he saith in the eighteenth chapter,  
I do not delight in a sinner's death,  
But that he should convert and live thus the Lord  
saith

## JUVENTUS

Then must I give neither credit nor faith  
Unto St Paul's saying, which this man did allege

## GOD'S MERCIFUL PROMISES

Yes, you must credit them according unto knowledge,  
 For St Paul speaketh of those which resist the  
 truth by violence,  
 And so end their lives without repentance  
 Thus <sup>1</sup> Saint Augustine <sup>2</sup> doth them define,  
 It unto the Lord's word you do your ears incline,  
 And observe these things which he hath commanded,  
 This sinful state, in the which you have lain,  
 Shall be forgotten and never more remembered  
 And Christ himself in the gospel hath promised,  
 That he, which in him unfeignedly doth believe,  
 Although he were dead, yet shall he live

JUVENTUS [*He riseth*]

These comfortable sayings doth me greatly move  
 To arise from this wretched place

## GOD'S MERCIFUL PROMISES

For me his mercy sake thou shalt obtain his grace,  
 And not for thine own desertes, this must thou know  
 For my sake alone ye shall receive solace,  
 For my sake alone, he will thee mercy show  
 Therefore to him, as it is most due,  
 Give most hearty thanks with heart unfeigned,  
 Whose name for evermore be praised

## GOOD COUNSEL

The prodigal son, as in Luke we read,  
 Which in vicious living his good doth waste,

---

<sup>1</sup> *Thus*, Vere's edition  
 VOL II

<sup>2</sup> *Augustine*, Copland's edition  
 G

As soon as his living he had remembered,  
 To confess his wretchedness he was not aghast,  
 Wherefore his father lovingly him embrac'd,  
 And was <sup>1</sup> right joyful, the text saith plain,  
 Because his son was returnen <sup>2</sup> again

# JUVENTUS

O sinful flesh, thy pleasures are but vain  
 Now I find it true, as the scripture doth say,  
 Broad <sup>3</sup> and pleasant is the path which leadeth  
     unto pain,  
 But unto eternal life full narrow is the way <sup>4</sup>  
 He that is not led by God's spirit surely goeth  
     astray,  
 And all that ever he doth shall be clean abhorred,  
 Although he brag and boast never so much of  
     God's word  
 O subtle Satan, full deceitful is thy snare,  
 Who is able thy falsehood to disclose?  
 What is the man, that thou doest favour or spare  
 And doest not <sup>5</sup> tempt him eternal joys to lose?  
 Not one in the world, surely I suppose  
 Therefore happy is the man, which doth truly  
     wait,  
 Always to refuse thy deceitful and crafty bait  
 When I had thought to live most christianly,  
 And followed the steps of Knowledge and Good  
     Counsel,  
 Ere I was aware, thou haddest deceived me,

---

<sup>1</sup> *As*, Copland's edition

<sup>2</sup> *Returned*, Vele's edition

<sup>3</sup> *Bode*, Vele's edition

<sup>4</sup> Mr Gairick's copy is imperfect, and ends at this mark  
 —*Hawkins*

<sup>5</sup> *Mot*, Vele's edition

And brought me into the path, which leadeth unto  
hell

And of an earnest professor of Christ's gospel  
Thou madest me an hypocrite, blind and pervert,  
And from virtue unto vice thou hadst clean turned  
my heart

First, by hypocrisy thou didest me move,  
The mortification of the flesh clean to forsake,  
And wanton desires to embrace and love,  
Alas ! to think on it my heart doth yet quake  
Under the title of Friendship to me ye spake,  
And so to wicked Fellowship did me bring,  
Which brought me clean to Abhominable Living  
Thus, I say, Satan did me deceive,  
And wrapped me in sin many a fold,  
The steps of Good Counsel I did forsake and  
leave,  
And forgot the words which before to me he  
told

The fruits of a true christian in me waxed cold,  
I followed mine own lusts, the flesh I did not  
tame,  
And had them in derision which would not do the  
same

Yet it hath pleased God of his endless mercy  
To give me respite my life to amend,  
From the bottom of my heart I repent my in-  
quity,

I will walk in his laws unto my life's end  
From his holy ordinance I will never descend,  
But my whole delight shall be to live therein,  
Utterly abhorring all filthiness and sin

<sup>1</sup> *All Christian people which be here present,  
May learn by me hypocrisy to know,*

---

<sup>1</sup> The following lines being torn are filled up by conjecture with the words printed in *italics* — *Haulins*

With which the devil, as with a poison most  
pestilent,  
Daily seeketh all men to overthrow  
Credit not all things unto the outward show,  
But try them with God's word, that squire<sup>1</sup> and  
rule most just,  
Which never deceiveth them, that in him put  
their trust  
Let no flattering friendship, nor yet wicked com-  
pany,  
Persuade you in no wise God's word to abuse,  
But see that you stand steadfastly unto the verity,  
And according to the rule thereof your doings  
frame and use,  
Neither kindred nor fellowship shall you excuse,  
When you shall appear before the judgment seat,  
But your own secret conscience shall then give an  
audit  
All you that be young, whom I do now represent,  
Set your delight both day and night on Christ's  
Testament  
If pleasure you tickle, be not fickle, and suddenly  
slide,  
But in God's fear everywhere see that you abide  
In your tender age seek for knowledge, and after  
wisdom run,  
And in your old age teach your family to do as  
you have done  
Your bodies subdue unto virtue, delight not in  
vanity,  
Say not, I am young, I shall live long, lest your  
days shortened be  
Do not incline to spend your time in wanton toys  
and nice,

---

<sup>1</sup> Square

For idleness doth increase much wickedness and  
vice  
Do not delay the time, and say, my end is not  
near,  
For with short warning the Lord coming shall  
suddenly appear  
God give us grace, his word to embrace, and to  
live thereafter,  
That by the same his holy name may be praised  
ever

## GOOD COUNSEL.

Now let us make our supplications together  
For the prosperous estate of our noble and virtuous  
king,<sup>1</sup>  
That in his godly proceedings he may still persevere,  
Which seeketh the glory of God above all other  
thing  
O Lord, endue his heart with true understanding,  
And give him a prosperous life long over us to  
reign,  
To govern and rule his people as a worthy captain

## JUVENTUS

Also let us pray for all the nobility of this realm,  
And, namely, for those whom his<sup>2</sup> grace hath  
authorised  
To maintain the public wealth over us and them,  
That they may see his gracious acts published,  
And that they, being truly admonished  
By the complaint of them which are wrongfully  
oppressed,  
May seek reformation, and see it redressed

---

<sup>1</sup> Edward VI<sup>2</sup> *Is*, Vele's edition

## GOOD COUNSEL

Then shall this land enjoy great quietness and rest  
And give unto God most hearty thanks therefore  
To whom be honour, praise, and glory for ever  
more <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [The colophon of Vele's edition is "Finis quod R  
Wever Imprinted at London in Paules church yeard, by  
Abraham Vele, at the sygne of the Lambe" Of Copland's  
edition, besides the Garrick copy, there is a second formerly  
Heber's, in the Devonshire collection ]

JACK JUGGLER.



## EDITION

*A new Enterlued for Chyldren to playe named Iacke  
Iugeler both wytte and very playsent Newly Imprinted*

### *The Players' Names*

*Mayster Boungrace,  
Dame Coye,  
Iacke Iugeler,  
Ienkin Caraway,  
Ales trype and go,*

*A Galant  
A Gentlewoman  
The vyce  
A Lackey  
A Mayd*

[Colophon] *Imprinted at London in Lothbury by  
me Wylliam Copland 4to, black letter*

Beneath the players' names occurs a woodcut, of  
which we annex a facsimile



## INTRODUCTION.

[SOME account of this piece may be found in Haslewood's Preface, which precedes our text of "Thersites" It may be added, that whatever shortcomings may be apparent in these productions from a literary and dramatic point of view, they are by no means devoid of a fair share of shrewd humour and pointed vivacity, and are, moreover, not unimportant contributions, especially when their early date is considered, to the illustration of manners. The low-comic view predominates in most of them, and we meet with occasional grossnesses which, so far as "Jack Juggler" itself is concerned, are the more remarkable when it is recollected that the performance was presented by youths. In none of these ruder specimens of the drama is any distribution to be found into acts and scenes, nor is it invariably clear how the entrances and exits were introduced.

As to the groundwork of this interlude, Mr Child observes —<sup>1</sup>]

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<sup>1</sup> [“Four Old Plays,” 1848, 9-12]

‘Plautus’s tragi-comedy of ‘Amphitryon’ has been perhaps more popular on the modern stage than any other ancient play. It is the groundwork of one of the best comedies of the great Molière, and of a once favourite English drama, which Sir Walter Scott, in an introduction not everywhere distinguished by his usual judgment, styles ‘one of the happiest effusions of Dryden’s comic muse’. It has been several times translated into our tongue, and by Bonnell Thornton, with an elegance, spirit, and correctness that leave nothing to be desired.

“This is not the place to expatiate on the merits of the Latin play, but the assertion may be hazarded without much risk, that both the original and Thornton’s version are, taken as wholes, considerably superior to any of the imitations. Indeed, the character of Alcmena, as drawn by Plautus, so truly innocent, simple, and loving, her distress on being suspected by her husband, and his agony at finding her, as he believes, dishonest, immediately suggest, as the accomplished translator has observed, a not discreditable comparison with our ‘Othello’. We may add, too, that the conclusion of the fourth act, where Amphitryon, ‘perplexed in the extreme,’ and defying the gods in the intensity of his despair, rushes to the house to wreak his vengeance on his family, and is struck down by lightning, rises to grandeur, almost to sublimity, and must produce immense dramatic effect in the representation. Very little of this sort of thing appears in the modern play. What Dryden has made of Alcmena will be understood, when we observe that he adapted her to

the standard of contemporary taste Yet Scott has strangely said, that, 'in the scenes of a higher cast, Dryden far outstrips both the French and Roman poet'

"The reader will not find any such important characters as gods and generals in the drama before him 'Jack Juggler' can hardly be called an imitation of the comedy of Plautus It is the play of 'Amphitryon' without the part of Amphitryon, and resembles more than anything else one of those pieces made up of the comic portions of plays, which used to be called 'drolls' In fact, 'Jack Juggler' is a caricature even of the comic parts All dignity is stripped from the characters, every ridiculous feature is much exaggerated, and the language and incidents are ingeniously vulgarized to reduce everything to the grotesque, the quaintness of the expressions greatly heightening the effect to a modern reader The amiable Alcmena becomes a 'verie cursed shrew' General Amphitryon sinks into Master Boungrace, a commonplace 'gentilman,' somewhat subject, we suspect, to being imposed upon by his wife and servants Bromia, the insignificant and well-conducted attendant, is changed into the smart and malicious Aulsoon tripe and goo

"There is no proper plot to the piece, the whole action consisting in getting Jenkin Careaware into as much trouble as possible, when he is left to go to bed with aching bones, and wishing bad luck to his second self He does not get off with a beating from Jack and his master The servant-maid lends her tongue, and her mistress both tongue and hand, for the amusement

of the spectators and the revenge of Jack Juggler. Those who are acquainted with the tedious performances of those times will recognise with pleasure an uncommon raciness and spirit in this little interlude. The lines are rude, but sharp and bold, and Dame Coye may even be called a well-drawn and original character.

“In Mr Wright’s ‘Early Mysteries, and other Latin Poems of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries,’ will be found a rather clever and once very popular poem, founded on ‘Amphitryon,’ the ‘Geta’ of Vital of Blois. Amphitryon in this is a student of Greek learning, and the awkwardness of Alcmena’s situation, after Jupiter’s visit is got over, by her assuring her confiding husband that she thinks the whole affair must have been a dream.”

# JACK JUGGLER



## THE PROLOGUE

*Interpone tuis interdum gaudia curis,  
Vt possis animo quemvis sufferre laborem*  
Do any of you know what Latin is this?  
Or else would you have an Expositorem  
To declare it in English *per sensum planior em*?  
It is best I speak English, or else within a while  
I may peicease mine own self with my Latin be  
guile

The two verses, which I rehearsed before,  
I find written in the Book of Cato the wise  
Among good precepts of living a thousand more,  
Which to follow there he doth all men advise  
And they may be Englished briefly in this wise  
Among thy careful business use sometime mirth  
and joy,  
That no bodily work thy wits break or 'noy

For the mind (saith he), in serious matters occupied,  
If it have not some quiet mirth and recreation  
Interchangeable admixed, must needs be soon  
wearied,

And (as who should say) tried through continual  
 operation  
 Of labour and business without relaxation  
 Therefore intermix honest mirth in such wise  
 That your strength may be refreshed, and to  
 labours suffice

For as meat and drink, natural rest and sleep,  
 For the conservation and health of the body,  
 Must needs be had, so the mind and wits to keep  
 Pregnant, fresh, industrious, quick and lusty,  
 Honest mirth and pastime is requisite and necessary  
 For, *Quod caret alterna requie diuabile non est*  
 Nothing may endure (saith Ouid) without some  
 rest

Example proof hereof in earth is well found,  
 Manifest, open, and very evident,  
 For except the husbandman suffer his ground  
 Sometimes to rest, it will bear no fruit ver-  
 ment,  
 Therefore they let the field lie every second year  
 To the end that, after rest, it may the better corn  
 bear

Thus then (as I have said) it is a thing natural,  
 And naturally belonging to all living creatures,  
 And unto man especially above others all,  
 To have at times convenient pastance, mirth and  
 pleasures,  
 So they be joined with honesty, and kept within  
 due measures,  
 And the same well allowed not only the said Cato,  
 But also the Philosophers, Plutarch, Socrates, and  
 Plato

And Cicero Tullius, a man sapient and wise,  
Willeth the same, in that his first book,  
Which he wrote and entituled of an honest man's  
office  
Who so is disposed thereupon to look,  
Where to define and affirm he boldly on him  
took,  
That to hear interludes is pastime convenient  
For all manner men, and a thing congruent

He reckoneth that namely as a very honest dis-  
port,  
And above all other things commendeth the old  
comedy,  
The hearing of which may do the mind comfort ,  
For they be replenished with precepts of philo-  
sophy  
They contain much wisdom, and teach prudent  
policy ,  
And though they be all writers of matters of none  
importance,  
Yet they show great wit, and much pretty con-  
veyance

And in this manner of making Plautus did excel,  
As recordeth the same Tullius, commending him  
by name  
Wherefore this maker delighteth passingly well  
To follow his arguments, and draw out the same,  
For to make at seasons convenient pastimes, mirth  
and game  
As now he hath done this matter, not worth an  
oyster shell,  
Except percase it shall fortune to make you laugh  
well



And for that purpose only this maker did it write,  
Taking the ground thereof out of Plautus first  
comedy

And the first sentence of the same, for higher  
things indite

In no wise he would, for yet the time is so queasy,  
That he that speaketh best, is least thank-worthy  
Therefore, sith nothing but trifles may be had,  
You shall hear a thing that only shall make you  
merry and glad

And such a trifling matter, as when it shall be done,  
Ye may report and say ye have heard nothing  
at all

Therefore I tell you all, before it be begun,  
That no man look to hear of matters substantial,  
Nor matters of any gravity either great or small  
For this maker showed us that such manner things  
Do never well beseeem little boys' handlings

Wherefore, if ye will not sourly your brows bend  
At such a fantastical conceit as this,  
But can be content to hear and see the end,  
I will go show the Players what your pleasure is,  
Which to wait upon you I know be ready ere this  
I will go send them hither into your presence,  
Desiring that they may have quiet audience

---

JACK JUGGLER

Our Lord of heaven and sweet Saint John  
Rest you merry, my masters everychone,  
And I pray to Christ and sweet Saint Stephen  
Send you all many a good even !

And you too, sir, and you, and you also,  
Good even to you an hundred times and a thousand  
mo  
Now by all these crosses of flesh, bone, and blood,  
I reckon my chance right marvellous good,  
Here now to find all this company,  
Which in my mind I wished for heartily,  
For I have laboured all day, till I am weary,  
And now am disposed to pass the time, and be  
merry  
And I think none of you, but he would do the  
same,  
For who woll be sad, and needeth not, is foul to  
blame,  
And as for me, of my mother I have been taught  
To be merry when I may, and take no thought  
Which lesson I bare so well away,  
That I use to make merry once a day  
And now, if all things happen right,  
You shall see as mad a pastime this night,  
As you saw this seven years, and as proper a toy  
As ever you saw played of a boy  
I am called Jack Juggler of many an one,  
And in faith I woll play a juggling cast anon  
I woll conjure the nowl,<sup>1</sup> and God before  
Or else let me lese my name for evermore  
I have it devised, and compassed how,  
And what ways I woll tell and show to you  
You all know well Master Bongiace,<sup>2</sup>  
The gentleman that dwelleth here in this place?  
And Jenkin Careaway his page, as cursed a lad,  
And as ungracious as ever man had,  
An unhappy wage, and as foolish a knave withal,  
As any is now within London wall

---

<sup>1</sup> [Mr Child printed *moull*]

<sup>2</sup> A fanciful name See Halliwell's *Dict*, v *Bongrace*

This Jenkin and I been fallen at great debate  
For a matter, that fell between us a-late ,  
And hitherto of him I could never revenged be,  
For his master maintaineth him, and loveth not  
me ,

Albeit, the very truth to tell,  
Nother of them both knoweth me not very well  
But against all other boys the said gentleman  
Maintaineth him all that he can  
But I shall set little by my wit,  
If I do not Jenkin this night requite  
Ere I sleep, Jenkin shall be met,  
And I trust to come partly out of his debt ,  
And when we meet again, if this do not suffice,  
I shall pay Jenkin the residue in my best wise  
It chanced me right now in the other end of the  
next street

With Jenkin and his master in the face to meet  
I abode there a while, playing for to see  
At the bucklers, as well became me  
It was not long time , but at the last  
Back cometh my cousin Careaway homeward full  
fast

Pricking, prancing, and springing in his short coat,  
And pleasantly singing with a merry note  
Whither away so fast ? tarry a while, said one  
I cannot now, said Jenkin, I must needs be gone  
My master suppeth hereby at a gentleman's place,  
And I must thither fetch my dame, Mistress Bon-  
grace

But yet, ere I go, I care not much  
At the bucklers to play with thee one fair touch  
To it they went, and played so long,  
Till Jenkin thought he had wrong  
By Cock's precious podstick, I will not home this  
night,  
Quod he, but as good a stripe on thy head light !

Within half an hour, or somewhat less,  
Jenkin left playing, and went to fetch his mistress ,  
But by the way he met with a fruiterer's wife  
There Jenkin and she fell at such strife  
For snatching of an apple, that down he cast  
Her basket, and gathered up the apples fast,  
And put them in his sleeve, then came he his way  
By another lane, as fast as he may,  
Till he came at a corner by a shop's stall,  
Where boys were at dice, faring at all ,  
When Careaway with that good company met,  
He fell to faring withouten let,  
Forgetting his message, and so did he fare,  
That when I came by, he gan swear and stare,  
And full bitterly began to curse,  
As one that had lost almost all in his purse  
For I know his old guise and condition,  
Never to leave, till all his money be gone  
For he hath no money but what he doth steal,  
And that woll he play away every deal  
I passed by, and then called unto my mind  
Certain old reckonings, that were behind  
Between Jenkin and me, whom partly to recom-  
pense

I trust by God's grace, ere I go hence  
This garments, cape, and all other gear,  
That now you see upon me here,  
I have done on all like unto his  
For the nonce , and my purpose is  
To make Jenkin believe, if I can,  
That he is not himself, but another man  
For except he hath better luck than he had,  
He woll come hither stark staring mad  
When he shall come, I woll handle my captive so  
That he shall not well wot whither to go  
His mistress, I know, she woll him blame,  
And his master also will do the same ,

Because that she of her supper deceived is,  
 For I am sure they have all supped by this  
 But, and if Jenkin would hither resort,  
 I trust he and I should make some sport,  
 If I had sooner spoken, he would have sooner been  
     here,  
 For me seemeth I do his voice hear

## CAREAWAY

Ah, sir, I may say I have been at a feast  
 I have lost two shillings and sixpence at the least  
 Marry, sir, of this gains I need make no boast,  
 But, the devil go with all, more have I lost '  
 My name is Careaway, let all sorrow pass '  
 I wold ere to-morrow night be as rich as ever I was,  
 Or at the furthest within a day or twain  
 My master's purse shall pay me again  
 Therefore ho ' Careaway, now wold I sing *her, her* '  
 But, by the Lord, now I remember another thing  
 By my faith, Jenkin, my mistress and thou  
 Are like to agree—God knoweth how—  
 That thou comest not for her incontinent,  
 To bring her to supper, when thou were sent ?  
 And now they have all supped, thou wold surely  
     abi',  
 Except thou imagine some pretty and crafty lie  
 For she is, as all other women be,  
 A very cursed shrew, by the blessed Trinity,  
 And a very devil, for if she once begin  
 To fight or chide, in a week she wold not lin,  
 And a great pleasure she hath specially now of  
     late  
 To get poor me now and then by the pate,  
 For she is an angry piece of flesh, and soon dis-  
     pleased,  
 Quickly moved, but not lightly appeased

We use to call her at home Dame Coy,  
A pretty gingerly piece, God save hei and St Loy '  
As dainty and nice as an halfpenny-worth of silver  
spoons,

But vengeable melancholy in the afternoons  
She useth for her bodily health and safeguard  
To chide daily one fit to supperward ,  
And my master himself is worse than she,  
If he once thoroughly angered be  
And a maid we have at home, Alison Trip-and-go .  
Not all London can show such other two  
She simpereth, she pranketh, and jetteth without fail,  
As a peacock that hath spread and showeth her  
gay tail

She minceth, she bridleth, she swimmeth to and fro  
She treadeth not one hair awry, she trippeth like  
a doe

Abroad in the street, going or coming homeward  
She quavereth and warbleth, like one in a galliard,  
Every joint in her body and every part  
O, it is a jolly wench to mince and divide a fart  
She talketh, she chatteth like a pie all day,  
And speaketh like a parrot popinjay,  
And that as fine as a small silken thread,  
Yea, and as high as an eagle can fly for a need.  
But it is a spiteful lying girl, and never well,  
But when she may some ill tale by me tell ,  
She woll, I wairant you, anon at the first  
Of me imagine and say the woist,  
And whatsoever she to my mistress doth say,  
It is written in the gospel of the same day  
Therefore I woll here with myself devise  
What I may best say, and in what wise  
I may excuse this my long tarrying,  
That she of my negligence may suspect nothing  
For if the fault of this be found in me,  
I may give my life for halfpennies three

[*Ille cogitabundo similis sedeat*]

Let me study this month, and I shall not find  
A better device than now is come to my mind  
Mistress, woll I say, I am bound by my duty  
To see that your womanhood have no injury,  
For I hear and see more than you now and then,  
And yourself partly know the wanton wiles of  
men

When we came yonder, there did I see  
My master kiss gentlewomen two or three,  
And to come among others me-thought I see,<sup>1</sup>  
He had a marvellous great phantasy  
Anon he commanded me to run thence for you,  
To come sup there, if you would, but (I wot not  
how)

My heart grudged, mistrusting lest that I, being  
away,

My master would some light cast play,  
Whereupon, mistress, to see the end,  
I tarried half supper-time, so God me mend!  
And, besides that there was such other company  
As I know your mistress-ship setteth nothing by,  
Gorgeous dames of the court and gallants also,  
With doctors and other rufflers mo  
At last when I thought it time and season  
I came to certify you, as it was reason,  
And by the way whom should I meet  
But that most honest gentleman in the street,  
Which the last week was with you here,  
And made you a banket and bouncing cheer?  
Ah, Jenkin, quod he, good speed! how farest thou?  
Marry, well, God yield it you, master, quod I  
how do you?

How doth thy mistress? is she at home?

Yea, sir, quod I, and suppeth all alone,

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *bysye*

And but she hath no manner good cheer,  
I am sure she would gladly have you there  
I cannot come now, said he, I have business,  
But thou shalt carry a token from me to thy  
mistress

Go with me to my chamber at yon lane-end,  
And I woll a dish of costards unto her send  
I followed him, and was bold, by your leave,  
To receive and bring them here in my sleeve  
But I would not for all England, by Jesus Christ,  
That my master Bongrace hereof wist,  
Or knew that I should any such gear to you bring,  
Lest he misdeem us both in some worse thing,  
Nor show him nothing of that I before said,  
For then indeed, sir, I am arrayed <sup>1</sup>  
If you do, I may nothing hereafter unto you tell,  
Whether I see my master do ill or well  
But <sup>2</sup> if you now this counsel keep,  
I woll ease you perchance twice in a week,  
You may say you were sick, and your head did ache  
That you lusted not this night any supper make,  
Specially without the doors, but thought it best  
To abide at home and take your rest,  
And I will to my master to bring him home,  
For you know he woll be angry, if he come alone  
This woll I say and face it so well,  
That she shall believe it every deal  
How say you, friends, by the arms of Robin Hood,  
Woll not this excuse be reasonable good?  
To muse for any better great folly it is,  
For I may make sure reckoning of this  
That, and if I would sit stewing this seven year,  
I shall not else find how to save me all clear

---

<sup>1</sup> Disconcerted, put out in my plans See Halliwell, *v*  
*array*

<sup>2</sup> Original reads *that*





## JACK JUGGLER

But if thou come from that gate, thou knave,  
I woll fet thee by the sweet locks,<sup>1</sup> so God me  
save !

## JENKIN CAREAWAY

Woll the whoreson fight indeed, by mine honesty ?  
I know no quarrel he hath to me ,  
But I would I were within the house,  
And then I would not set by him a louse ,  
For I fear and mistrust such quarreling thieves  
See, how he beginneth to strike up his sleeves !

## JACK JUGGLER

His arse maketh buttons now, and who lusteth to  
feel,  
Shall find his heart creeping out at his heel,  
Or else lying hidden in some corner of his hose,  
If it be not already dropped out of his nose  
For, as I doubt not but you have heard before,  
A more dastard coward knave was never born.

## JENKIN CAREAWAY

The devil set the house a-fire ! I trow it is accurst ,  
When a man hath most haste, he speedeth worst ,  
If I be robbed or slain, or any harm get,  
The fault is in them, that doth not me in let

<sup>1</sup> Original has *suet looles*

Compare the "Pardoner and the Friar" (i 231)—

"Or by Jis I'sh lug thee *by the sweet ears*,"

and a passage in the present piece—

"I have forgotten *with tousing by the han* "

And I durst jeopard an hundred pound,  
 That some bawdry might now within be found,  
 But except some of them come the sooner,  
 I shall knock such a peal, that all England shall  
                   wonder

## JACK JUGGLER

Knock at the gate hardily again, if thou dare,  
 And seeing thou wolt not by fair words beware,  
 Now, fists, me-thinketh, yesterday seven past,  
 That four men asleep at my feet you cast,  
 And this same day you did no manner good  
 Noi were not washen in waim blood

## JENKIN CAREAWAY

What whoreson is this that washeth in waim blood ?  
 Some devil broken loose out of hell for wood ?  
 Four hath he slain, and now well I see,  
 That it must be my chance the fifth to be ?  
 But rather than thus shamefully to be slain,  
 Would Christ my friends had hanged me, being  
                   but years twain !  
 And yet, if I take good heart and be bold,  
 Percase he woll be more sober and cold

## JACK JUGGLER

Now, hands, bestir you about his lips and face,  
 And strike out all his teeth without any grace !  
 Gentleman, are you disposed to eat any fist-meat ?—

## JENKIN CAREAWAY

I have supped, I thank you, sir, and list not to  
                   eat  
 Give it to them that are hungry, if you be wise

## JACK JUGGLER

It<sup>1</sup> shall do a man of your diet no harm to sup  
twice  
This shall be your cheese to make your meat  
digest,  
For I tell you these hands weigheth of the best

## JENKIN CAREAWAY

I shall never escape see, how he waggeth his hands !

## JACK JUGGLER

With a stroke they will lay a knave in our Lady -  
bonds,<sup>2</sup>  
And this day yet they have done no good at all

## JENKIN CAREAWAY

Eie thou essay them on me, I play thee lame them  
on the wall—  
But speak you all this in earnest or in game ?—  
If you be angry with me, truly you are to blame ,  
For have you any just quarrel to me ?

## JACK JUGGLER

Eie thou and I part that woll I show thee—

## JENKIN CAREAWAY

Or have I done you any manner displeasure ?—

---

<sup>1</sup> Original reads *yet*

<sup>2</sup> Original has *boons* The sense appears to be that "Jack Juggler" will, by killing Careaway, leave him to the mercy of the Virgin

JACK JUGGLER

Eie thou and I part, thou shalt know, thou mayest  
be sure—

JENKIN CAREAWAY

By my faith, if you be angry without a cause,  
You shall have amends made with a couple of  
straws,  
By thee I set whatsoever thou art,  
But for thy displeasure I care not a far  
May a man demand whose servant you be ?

JACK JUGGLER

My master's servant I am, for verity !

JENKIN CAREAWAY

What business have you at this place now ?

JACK JUGGLER

Nay, marry, tell me what business hast thou ?  
For I am commanded for to watch and give  
diligence  
That, in my good Master Bongrace's absence,  
No misfortune may happen to his house, certain

JENKIN CAREAWAY

Well now I am come, you may go hence again,  
And thank them that so much for my master hath  
done  
Showing them that the servants of the house be  
come home,  
For I am of the house, and now in wolle I go

## JACK JUGGLER

I cannot tell whether thou be of the house or no,  
But go no near,<sup>1</sup> lest I handle thee like a stranger,  
Thank no man but thyself, if thou be in any danger

## JENKIN CAREAWAY

Marry, I defy thee, and plainly unto thee tell,  
That I am a servant of this house, and here I dwell

## JACK JUGGLER

Now, so God me snatch, but thou go thy ways,  
While thou mayest, for this forty days  
I shall make thee not able to go nor ride  
But in a dung-cart or wheelbarrow lying on one  
side

## JENKIN CAREAWAY

I am a servant of this house, by these ten bones—<sup>2</sup>

## JACK JUGGLER

No more prating, but get thee hence at once<sup>1</sup>

## JENKIN CAREAWAY

Why, my master hath sent me home in<sup>3</sup> his mes-  
sage—

## JACK JUGGLER

Pick and walk, a knave, here away is no passage—

---

<sup>1</sup> i e, Nearer

<sup>2</sup> ? Finger bones

<sup>3</sup> i e, On

## JENKIN CAREAWAY

What, wilt thou let me from mine own master's  
house ?

## JACK JUGGLER

Be tredging, or in faith you bear me a souse <sup>1</sup>  
Here my master and I have our habitation,  
And hath continually dwelled in this mansion,  
At the least this dozen years and odd ,  
And here woll we end our lives, by the grace of  
God

## JENKIN CAREAWAY

Why, then, where shall my master and I dwell ?

## JACK JUGGLER

At the devil, if you lust I cannot tell

## JENKIN CAREAWAY

*In nomine patris*, now this gear doth pass  
For a little before supper here our house was ,  
And this day in the morning I woll on a book  
swear,  
That my master and I both dwelled here

## JACK JUGGLER

Who is thy master ? tell me without lie,  
And thine own name also let me know shortly ,  
For, my masters all, let me have the blame,  
If this knave know his master or his own name

---

<sup>1</sup> Blow.

## CAREAWAY

My master's name is Master Bongrace  
I have dwelled with him a long space,  
And I am Jenkin Careaway his page—

## JACK JUGGLER

What, ye drunken knave, begin you to rage !  
Take that art thou Master Bongrace's page ?  
*[Strikes him]*

## CAREAWAY

It I be not, I have made a very good voyage—

## JACK JUGGLER

Darest thou to my face say thou art I ?

## CAREAWAY

I would it were true and no lie,  
For then thou shouldest smart, and I should bet,<sup>1</sup>  
Where as now I do all the blows get

## JACK JUGGLER

And is Master Bongrace thy master, doest you  
then say ?

## CAREAWAY

I woll swear on a book, he was once this day—

---

<sup>1</sup> Should do better





CAREAWAY

In faith, now I leave crying now I cease help,  
help'

JACK JUGGLER

Who is thy master ?

CAREAWAY

Master Bongrace—

JACK JUGGLER

I woll make thee change that song, ere we pass this  
place,  
For he is my master, and again to thee I say,  
That I am his Jenkin Careaway  
Who art thou ? now tell me plain

CAREAWAY

Nobody but whom please you, certain-

JACK JUGGLER

Thou saigest even now thy name was Careaway.

CAREAWAY

I cry you mercy, sir, and forgiveness pray  
I said amiss, because it was so to-day,  
And thought it should have continued alway,  
Like a fool as I am and a drunken knave  
But in faith, sir, ye see all the wit I have,  
Therefore I beseech you do me no more blame,

But give me a new master and another name  
For it would grieve my heart, so help me God,  
To run about the streets like a masterless nod <sup>1</sup>

## JACK JUGGLER

I am he that thou saigest thou were,  
And Master Bongiaze is my master, that dwelleth  
here,  
Thou art no point, Careaway, thy wits do thee  
fail

## CAREAWAY

Yea, manny, sir, you have beaten them down into  
my tail,  
But, sir, might I be bold to say one thing  
Without any blows and without any beating?

## JACK JUGGLER

Truce for a while, say on what thee lust

## CAREAWAY

May a man to your honesty by your word trust?  
I pray you swear by the mass you woll do me no  
ill—

## JACK JUGGLER

By my faith, I promise pardon thee I will—

## CAREAWAY

What, and you keep no promise?

---

<sup>1</sup> i e, Noddy

JACK JUGGLER

Then upon Careaway<sup>1</sup>  
I pray God light as much or more as hath on thee  
to-day

CAREAWAY

Now dare I speak, so mote I the,  
Master Bongrace is my master, and the name of me  
Is Jenkin Careaway !

JACK JUGGLER

What, sayest thou so ?

CAREAWAY

And if thou wilt strike me, and break thy promise,  
do,  
And beat on me, till I stink, and till I die,  
And yet woll I still say that I am I !

JACK JUGGLER

This Bedlam knave without doubt is mad—

CAREAWAY

No, by God, for all that I am a wise lad,  
And can call to remembrance every thing  
That I did this day sith my uprising,  
For went not I with my master to-day  
Early in the morning to the tennis play ?  
At noon, while my master at his dinner sat,  
Played not I at dice at the gentleman's gate ?

---

<sup>1</sup> Original reads, *up car*

Did not I wait on my master to supper-ward ?  
And I think I was not changed the way homeward !  
Or else, if thou think I lie,  
Ask in the street of them that I came by,  
And sith that I came hither into your presence,  
What man living could carry me hence ?  
I remember I was sent to fetch my mistress,  
And what I devised to save me harmless,  
Do not I speak now ? [is] not this my hand ?  
Be not these my feet that on this ground stand ?  
Did not this other knave here knock me about the  
head ?  
And beat me, till I was almost dead ?  
How may it then be, that he should be I ?  
O! I not myself ?—it is a shameful lie  
I woll home to our house, whosoever say nay,  
For surely my name is Jenkin Careaway.

## JACK JUGGLER

I woll make thee say otherwise, ere we depart, if we  
can—

## JENKIN CAREAWAY

Nay that woll I not in faith for no man,  
Except thou tell me what thou hast done<sup>1</sup>  
Ever sith five of the clock this afternoon  
Rehearse me all that without any lie,  
And then I woll confess that thou art I

## JACK JUGGLER

When my master came to the gentleman's place,  
He commanded me to run home a great pace,

---

<sup>1</sup> Original reads, *I thou hast*

To fet thither my mistress , and by the way  
 I did a good while at the bucklers play ,  
 Then came I by a wife, that did costards sell,  
 And cast down her basket full and well,  
 And gathered as many as I could get,  
 And put them in my sleeve here they be yet !

## CAREAWAY

How the devil should they come there,  
 For I did them all in my own sleeve bear ?  
 He leeth not a word in all this,  
 Nor doth in any one point miss  
 For ought I see yet between earnest and game  
 I must go seek me another name ,  
 But thou mightest see all this —tell the rest that  
                   is behind,  
 And there I know I shall thee a liar find

## JACK JUGGLER

I ran thence homeward a contrary way,  
 And whether I stopped there or nay,  
 I could tell, if me lusteth, a good token ,  
 But it may not very well be spoken

## JENKIN CAREAWAY

Now, may I pray thee, let no man that hear,  
 But tell it me privily in mine ear

## JACK JUGGLER

Ay, thou lost all thy money at dice, Christ give it  
                   his curse,  
 Well and truly picked before out of another man's  
                   purse !

## JENKIN CAREAWAY

God's body, whoreson thief, who told thee that  
same ?

Some cunning devil is within thee, pain of shame !  
*In nomine patris*, God and our blessed lady,  
Now and evermore save me from thy company !

## JACK JUGGLER

How now, art thou Careaway or not ?

## CAREAWAY

By the Lord, I doubt, but sayest thou nay to that !

## JACK JUGGLER

Yea, marry, I tell thee, Care-away is my name

## CAREAWAY

And, by these ten bones, mine is the same !  
Or else tell me, if I be not he,  
What my name from henceforth shall be ?

## JACK JUGGLER

By my faith, the same that it was before,  
When I lust to be Careaway no more  
Look well upon me, and thou shalt see as now  
That I am Jenkin Careaway, and not thou  
Look well upon me, and by every thing  
Thou shalt well know that I am not lesing

## CAREAWAY

I see it is so without any doubt,  
But how the devil came it about ?

Whoso in England looketh on him steadily,  
 Shall perceiue plainly that he is I  
 I have seen myself a thousand times in a glass,  
 But so like myself, as he is, never was,  
 He hath in every point my clothing and my gear  
 My head, my cap, my shirt, and knotted hair,  
 And of the same colour my eyes, nose, and lips  
 My cheeks, chin, neck, feet, legs, and hips  
 Of the same stature, and height, and age  
 And is in every point Master Bongrace page,  
 That if he have a hole in his tail,  
 He is even I mine own self without any fail!  
 And yet when I remember, I wot not how,  
 The same man that I have ever been me thinketh  
     I am now  
 I know my master and his house, and my five wits  
     I have  
 Why then should I give credence to this foolish  
     knave,  
 That nothing intendeth but me delude and mock?  
 For whom should I fear at my master's gate to  
     knock?

## JACK JUGGLER

Thinkest thou I have said all this in game?  
 Go, or I shall send thee hence in the devil's name!  
 Avoid, thou lousy lurden and precious stinking  
     slave,  
 That neither thy name knowest nor canst any  
     master have!  
 Wine-shaken pillory-peeper,<sup>1</sup> of lice not without a  
     peck,  
 Hence, or by Gods precious,<sup>2</sup> I shall break thy  
     neck!

---

<sup>1</sup> Original reads, *pilory peepours*

<sup>2</sup> [A common abbreviation, leaving its substantive to be supplied at pleasure]



## CAREAWAY

Then, master, I beseech you heartily take the pain,  
If I be found in any place, to bring me to me  
again

Now is not this a wonderful case,  
That no man shall lese himself so in any place?<sup>1</sup>  
Have any of you heard of such a thing heretofore?  
No, nor never shall, I daresay, from henceforth  
any more

JACK JUGGLER [*Aside*]

While he museth and judgeth himself upon,  
I will steal away for a while, and let him alone  
[*Exit Jack Juggler*]

## CAREAWAY

Good Lord of heaven, where did I myself leave?<sup>1</sup>  
Or who did me of my name by the way bereave?  
For I am sure of this in my mind,  
That I did in no place leave myself behind  
If I had my name played away at dice,  
Or had sold myself to any man at a price,  
Or had made a fray, and had lost it in fighting,  
Or it had been stolen from me sleeping,  
It had been a matter, and I would have kept  
patience,  
But it spiteth my heart to have lost it by such  
open negligence  
Ah, thou whoreson, drowsy, drunken sot!<sup>1</sup>  
It were an alms-deed to walk<sup>1</sup> thy coat,  
And I shrew him that would for thee be sorry,  
To see thee well curried by and by,

---

<sup>1</sup> [Perhaps in our modern sense of *to walk into*]

And, by Christ, if any man would it do,  
I myself would help thereto  
For a man may see, thou whoreson goose,  
Thou wouldest lese thine arse, if it were loose<sup>1</sup>  
Albeit I would never the deed believe,  
But that the thing itself doth show and pieve<sup>1</sup>  
There was never ape so like unto an ape,  
As he is to me in feature and shape,  
But what woll my master say, trow ye,  
When he shall this gear hear and see?  
Will he know me, think you, when he shall see  
me?

If he do not, another woll as good as he  
But where is that other I? whither is he gone?  
To my master, by Cock's precious passion  
Either to put me out of my place,  
Or to accuse me to my master Bongrace!  
But I woll after, as fast as I can flee  
I trust to be there as soon as he  
That if my master be not ready home to come,  
I woll be here again as fast as I can run  
In any wise to speak with my mistress,  
Or else I shall never escape hanging doubtless

## DAME COY

I shall not sup this night, full well I see,  
For as yet nobody cometh for to fet me  
But good enough, let me alone  
I woll be even with them every-chone  
I say nothing, but I think somewhat, i-wis  
Some there be that shall hear of this!  
Of all unkind and churlish husbands this is the  
cast,  
To let their wives sit at home and fast,

---

<sup>1</sup> Prove

While they be forth, and make good cheer  
Pastime and sport, as now he doth there  
But if I were a wise woman, as I am a mome,  
I should make myself, as good cheer at home  
But if he have thus unkindly seived me,  
I woll not forget it this months three,  
And if I wist the fault were in him, I pray God I  
be dead,  
But he should have such a curry,<sup>1</sup> ere he went to  
bed,  
As he never had before in all his life,  
Nor any man else have had of his wife '  
I would iate him and shake him after such a sort,  
As should be to him a corrosive full little to his  
comfort '

## ALLISON TRIP-AND-GO

If I may be so bold, by your mistress-ship's license,  
As to speak and show my mind and sentence,  
I think of this you may the boy thank,  
For I know that he playeth you many a like prank,  
And that would you say, if you knew as much as  
we,  
That his daily conversation and behaviour see,  
For if you command him to go speak with some  
one,  
It is an hour, ere he woll be gone,  
Then woll he run forth, and play in the street,  
And come again, and say that he cannot with him  
meet

## DAME COY.

Nay, nay, it is his master's play  
He serveth me so almost every third day,

---

<sup>1</sup> [Orig *kyrie* ]

But I woll be even with him, as God give me joy,  
And yet the fault may be in the boy—  
As ungracious a graft, so mot I thrive,  
As any goeth on God's ground alive !

## CAREAWAY

My wit is breeched in such a brake,  
That I cannot devise what way is best to take  
I was almost as far as my master is ,  
But then I began to remember this,  
And to cast the worst, as one in fear  
If he chance to see me and keep me there,  
Till he come himself, and speak with my mistress  
Then am I like to be in shrewd distress  
Yet were I better, thought I, to turn home again  
And first speak with her, certain—  
Cock's body, yonder she standeth at the door !  
Now is it worse than it was before  
Would Christ I could get again out of her sight  
For I see by her look she is disposed to fight  
By the Lord, she hath there an angry shrew's look—

## DAME COY

Lo, yonder cometh that unhappy hook !

## CAREAWAY

God save me, mistress, do you know me well ?

## DAME COY

Come near<sup>1</sup> hither unto me, and I shall thee tell.  
Why, thou naughty villain, is that thy guise,

---

<sup>1</sup> Nearer

To jest with thy mistress in such wise?<sup>1</sup>  
Take that to begin with, and God before!  
When thy master cometh home, thou shalt have  
    more  
For he told me, when he forth went,  
That thou shouldest come back again incontinent  
To bring me to supper where he now is,  
And thou hast played by the way, and they have  
    done by this  
But no force I shall, thou mayest trust me,  
Teach all naughty knaves to beware by thee

## CAREAWAY

Forsooth, mistress, if ye knew as much as I,  
Ye would not be with me half so angry,  
For the fault is neither in my master, nor in me,  
    nor you,  
But in another knave that was here even now,  
And his name was Jenkin Careaway—

## DAME COY

What, I see my man is disposed to play!  
I ween he be drunken or mad, I make God a vow!

## CAREAWAY

Nay, I have been made sober and tame, I, now —  
I was never so handled before in all my life  
I would every man in England had so beaten<sup>1</sup> his  
    wife!  
I have forgotten with tousing by the hair,  
What I devised to say a little ere

---

<sup>1</sup> Original reads, *beat me*

DAME COY

Have I lost my supper this night through thy  
negligence?

CAREAWAY

Nay then were I a knave, mistress, saving your  
reverence

DAME COY

Why, I am sure that by this time it is done—

CAREAWAY

Yea, that it is more than an hour ago—

DAME COY

And was not thou sent to fetch me thither?—

CAREAWAY

Yea, and had come right quickly hither,  
But that by the way I had a great fall,  
And my name, body, shape, legs, and all  
And met with one, that from me did it steal,  
But, by God, he and I some blows did deal<sup>1</sup>  
I would he were now before your gate,  
For you would pummel him jollily about the pate

DAME COY

Truly this wage-pasty<sup>1</sup> is either drunken or mad

---

<sup>1</sup> [A term of contempt, perhaps of no very definite or clear  
signification, but it does not seem to be glossed.]

## CAREAWAY

Never man suffered so much wrong as I had ,  
But, mistress, I should say a thing to you  
Tarry, it woll come to my remembrance even now  
I must needs use a substantial premeditation ,  
For the matter lieth greatly me upon  
I beseech your mistress-ship of pardon and forgive-  
ness,  
Desiring you to impute it to my simple and rude  
dulness  
I have forgotten what I had <sup>1</sup> thought to have said  
And am thereof full ill-afraid ,  
But when I lost myself, I knew very well,  
I lost also that I should you tell

## DAME COY

Why, thou wretched villain, doest thou me scorn  
and mock,  
To make me to these folk a laughing-stock ?  
Ere thou go out of my hands, thou shalt have  
something ,  
And I woll reckon better in the morning

## CAREAWAY

And if you beat me, mistress, advise you ,  
For I am none of your servants now  
That other I is now your page,  
And I am no longer in your bondage

## DAME COY

Now walk, precious thief, get thee out of my sight !

---

<sup>1</sup> Original has *have*

And I charge thee come in my presence no more  
this night  
Get thee hence, and wait on thy master at once

## CAREAWAY

Marry, sir, this is handling for the nonce  
I would I had been hanged, before that I was  
lost,  
I was never this<sup>1</sup> canvassed and tossed  
That if my master, on his part also,  
Handle me, as my mistress and the other I<sup>2</sup> do,  
I shall surely be killed between them three,  
And all the devils in hell shall not save me  
But yet, if the other I might have with me part,  
All this would never grieve my heart  
*[Enter Jack Juggler]*

## JACK JUGGLER

How say you, masters, I play you tell,  
Have not I requited my merchant well?  
Have not I handled him after a good sort?  
Had it not been pity to have lost this sport?  
Anon his master, on his behalf,  
You shall see how he wold handle the calf!  
If he throughly angered be,  
He wold make him smart, so mot I the  
I would not for a price of a new pair of shone,  
That any part of this had been undone,  
But now I have revenged my quarrel,  
I wold go do off this mine apparel,  
And now let Careaway be Careaway again,  
I have done with that name now, certain,

---

<sup>1</sup> Thus

<sup>2</sup> i.e., Jack Juggler



Except peradventure I shall take the self-same weed  
Some other time again for a like cause and need

*[Enter Bongrace and Careaway]*

BONGRACE

Why, then, darest thou to presume to tell me,  
That I know is no wise possible for to be ?

CAREAWAY

Now, by my truth, master, I have told you no lie,  
And all these folks knoweth as well as I,  
I had no sooner knocked at the gate,  
But straightway he had me by the pate,  
Therefore, if you beat me, till I fart and shit again,  
You shall not cause me for any pain,  
But I woll affirm, as I said before,  
That when I came near, another stood at the door

BONGRACE

Why, thou naughty villain, darest thou affirm to me  
That which was never seen nor hereafter shall be ?  
That one man may have two bodies and two faces,  
And that one man at one time may be in two  
places ?  
Tell me, drankest thou anywhere by the way ?

CAREAWAY

I shrew me, if I drank any more than twice to-day,  
Till I met even now with that other I,  
And with him I supped and drank truly,  
But as for you, if you gave me drink and meat,  
As oftentimes as you do me beat,  
I were the best-fed page in all this city

But, as touching that, you have on me no pity,  
And not only I, but all that do you serve,  
For meat and drink may rather starve

## BONGRACE

What, you saucy malapert knave,  
Begin you with youi master to prate and rave?  
Your tongue is liberal and all out of frame  
I must needs conjure it, and make it tame  
Where is that other Careaway that thou said was  
here?

## CAREAWAY

Now, by my christendom, sir, I wot ne'er?

## BONGRACE

Why, canst thou find no man to mock but me?

## CAREAWAY

I mock you not, master, so mot I the,  
Every word was true that I you told

## BONGRACE

Nay I know toys and pranks of old,  
And now thou art not satisfied nor content,  
Without regard of my biddings and command-  
ment,  
To have played by the way as a lewd knave and  
negligent,  
When I thee on my message home sent,  
But also wouldest willingly me delude and mock,  
And make me to all wise men a laughing-stock  
Showing me such things as in no wise be may,

To the intent thy lewdness may turn to jest and  
play,  
Therefore if thou speak any such thing to me again,  
I promise it shall be unto thy pain

## CAREAWAY

Lo, is not he in miserable case,  
That serveth such a master in any place?  
That with force wold compel him that thing to deny,  
That he knoweth true, and hath seen with his  
eye?

## BONGRACE

Was it not, trowest thou, thine own shadow?

## CAREAWAY

My shadow could never have beaten me so!

## BONGRACE

Why, by what reason possible may such a thing be?

## CAREAWAY

Nay, I marvel and wonder at it more than ye,  
And at the first it did me curstly meve<sup>1</sup>  
Nor I would mine own eyes in no wise believe,  
Until that other I beat me so,  
That he made me believe it, whether I would or no  
And if he had yourself now within his reach,  
He would make you say so too, or else beshit you  
breech

---

<sup>1</sup> Move

## MASTER BONGRACE

I durst a good meed and a wager lay,  
That thou layest down and slepst by the way,  
And dreamed all this, that thou hast me told

## CAREAWAY

Nay, there you lie, master, if I might be so bold,  
But we rise so early that, if I had,  
I had done well, and a wise lad  
Yet, master, I would you understood,  
That I have always been trusty and good,  
And fly as fast as a bear in a cage,  
Whensoever you send me in your message,  
In faith, as for this that I have told you,  
I saw and felt it as waking as I am now  
For I had no sooner knocked at the gate,  
But the other-I knave had me by the pate,  
And I durst to you on a book swear,  
That he had been watching for me there,  
Long ere I came, hidden in some privy place,  
Even for the nonce to have me by the face

## MASTER BONGRACE

Why, then, thou spakest not with my wife ?

## CAREAWAY

No, that I did not, master, by my life,  
Until that other I was gone,  
And then my mistress sent me after anon,  
To wait on you home in the devil's name  
I ween the devil never so beat his dame !

## MASTER BONGRACE.

And where became that other Careaway ?

## CAREAWAY

By mine honesty, sir, I cannot say,  
But I warrant he is now not far hence,  
He is here among this company, for forty pence

## MASTER BONGRACE

Hence, at once seek and smell him out,  
I shall rap thee on the lying knave's snout  
I woll not be deluded with such a glossing lie,  
Nor give credence, till I see it with my own eye

## CAREAWAY

Truly, good sir, by your mastership's favour,  
I cannot well find a knave by the savour,  
Many here smell strong, but none so rank as he  
A stronger-scented knave than he was cannot be  
But, sir, if he be haply found anon,  
What amends shall I have for that you have me  
done?

## MASTER BONGRACE

If he may be found, I shall walk his coat

## CAREAWAY

Yea, for our lady's sake, sir, I beseech you spare  
him not,  
For it is some false knave withouten doubt  
I had rather than forty pence we could find him  
out,  
For, if a man may believe a glass,  
Even my very own self it was  
And here he was but even right now,  
And stepped away suddenly, I wot not how

Of such another thing I have neither heard ne seen,  
By our blessed lady, heaven queen !

## MASTER BONGRACE

Plainly it was thy shadow, that thou didst see,  
For, in faith, the other thing is not possible to be

## CAREAWAY

Yes, in good faith, sir, by your leave,  
I know it was I by my apples in my sleeve,  
And speaketh as like me as ever you heard <sup>1</sup>  
Such hair, such a cap, such hose and coat,  
And in everything as just as fouppence to a groat  
That if he were here, you should well see,  
That you could not discern nor know him from  
me,

For think you, that I do not myself know ?  
I am not so foolish a knave, I trow  
Let who woll look him by and by,  
And he woll depose upon a book that he is I,  
And I dare well say you woll say the same,  
For he called himself by my own name  
And he told me all that I have done,  
Sith five of the clock this afternoon,  
He could tell when you were to supper set  
[When] you send me home my mistress to fet,  
And showed me all things that I did by the way—

## BONGRACE

What was that ?

---

<sup>1</sup> [A line seems to have dropped out here ]

## CAREAWAY

How I did at the bucklers play,  
And when I scattered a basket of apples from a  
stall,  
And gathered them into my sleeve all,  
And how I played after that also—

## BONGRACE

Thou shalt have, boy, therefore,<sup>1</sup> so mote I go,  
Is that the guise of a trusty page,  
To play, when he is sent on his master's message?

## DAME COY

Lay on and spare not, for the love of Christ,  
Joll his head to a post,<sup>2</sup> and favour your fist!  
Now for my sake, sweetheart, spare and favour  
your hand,  
And lay him about the ribs with this wand

## CAREAWAY

Now mercy that I ask of you both twain  
Save my life, and let me not be slain  
I have had beating enough for one day  
That a mischief take the other-me Careaway!  
That if ever he come to my hands again,  
I-wis it shall be to his pain  
But I marvel greatly, by our Lord Jesus,  
How he-I escaped, I-me beat me thus  
And is not he-I an unkind knave,  
That woll no more pity on myself have?

---

<sup>1</sup> [Original reads *have by therefore*]

<sup>2</sup> [Beat his head against a post]

Here may you see evidently, i-wis,  
That in him-me no drop of honesty is  
Now a vengeance light on such a churlish knave  
That no more love toward myself have !

DAME COY

I knew very,<sup>1</sup> sweet-heart, and said right now,  
That no fault thereof should be in you

BONGRACE

No, truly, good bedfellow, I were then much unkind,  
If you at any time should be out of my mind

DAME COY

Surely, I have of you a great treasure,  
For you do all things which may be to my pleasure

BONGRACE

I am sorry that your chance hath now been so ill  
I would gladly been unsupped, so you had your  
fill,  
But go we in, pigsme, that you may sup,  
You have cause now to thank this same hang-up,  
For had not he been, you had fared very well

DAME COY

I bequeath him with a hot vengeance to the devil  
of hell,  
And heartily I beseech him that hanged on the  
rood,

---

<sup>1</sup> Verily



That he never eat nor drink that may do him  
good,  
And that he die a shameful death, saving my  
charity !

## CAREAWAY

I pray God send him such prosperity,  
That hath caused me to have all this business  
But yet, sirs, you see the charity of my mistress  
She liveth after a wonderful charitable fashion ,  
For I assure you she is always in this passion,  
And scarcely one day throughout the whole year  
She woll wish any man better cheer,  
And some time, if she well-angered be,  
I pray God (woll she say) the house may sink  
under me !

But, masters, if you happen to see that other I,  
As that you shall, it is not very likely,  
Nor I woll not desire you for him purposely to  
look,

For it is an uncomparable unhappy hook ,  
And if it be I, you might happen to seek,  
And not find me out in an whole week  
For when I was wont to run away,  
I used not to come again in less than a month or  
tway

Howbert, for all this I think it be not I ,  
For, to show the matter indeed truly,  
I never use to run away in winter nor in vere,<sup>1</sup>  
But always in such time and season of the year,  
When honey lieth in the hives of bees,  
And all manner fruit falleth from the trees  
As apples, nuts, pears, and plums also,  
Whereby a boy may live abroad a month or two

---

<sup>1</sup> Spring

This cast do I use, I woll not with you feign ,  
Therefore I wonder if he be I, certain  
But, and if he be, and you meet me abroad by  
chance,

Send me home to my master with a vengeance !  
And show him, if he come not here to-morrow  
night,

I woll never receive him again, if I might ,  
And in the meantime I woll give him a goad,  
That woll well and thriftly walk his coat ,  
For a more ungracious knave is not even now  
Between this place and Calicow<sup>1</sup>

No! a more frantic-mad knave in Bedlam,  
No! a more fool hence to Jerusalem  
That if to come again percase he shall refuse,  
I woll continue as I am, and let him choose ,  
And but he come the sooner, by our lady bright,  
He shall lie without the doors all night  
For I woll shit<sup>2</sup> up the gate, and get me to-  
bed,

For I promise you I have a very giddy head  
I need no supper for this night,  
No! would eat no meat, though I might ,  
And for you also, master, I think it<sup>1</sup> best  
You go to-bed, and take your rest  
For who of you had been handled as I have  
been,

Would not be long out of his bed, I ween ,  
No more woll I, but steal out of sight  
I pray God give you all good night !  
And send you better hap and fortune,  
Than to lese yourself homeward as I have done

*[Exit Careaway]*

---

<sup>1</sup> Calicow or Calicut, i.e., Calcutta

<sup>2</sup> Shut

<sup>3</sup> Original has *I*

Somewhat it was, saith the proverb old,  
That the cat winked when her eye was out,  
That is to say, no tale can be told,  
But that some English may be picked thereof out  
If so to search the Latin and ground of it men will  
go about,  
As this trifling enterlude that before you hath been  
rehearsed,  
May signify some further meaning, if it be well  
searched

Such is the fashion of the world now-a-days,  
That the simple innocents are deluded,  
And an hundred thousand divers ways  
By subtle and crafty means shamefully abused,  
And by strength, force, and violence oftentimes com-  
pelled  
To believe and say the moon is made of a green  
cheese  
Or else have great harm, and percase their life  
lese

And an old saying it is, that most times might,  
Force, strength, power, and colourable subtlety  
Doth oppress, debar, overcome, and defeat right,  
Though the cause stand never so greatly against  
equity,  
And the truth thereof be knowen for never so perfit  
certanty  
Yea, and the poor simple innocent that hath had  
wrong and injury,  
Must call the other his good master for showing  
him such mercy

And as it is daily seen, for fear of further disprofit,  
He must that man his best friend and master call,  
Of whom he never received any manner benefit,

And at whose hand he never han any good at all,  
And must grant, affirm, or deny, whatsoever he  
shall

He must say the crow is white, if he be so com-  
manded,

Yea, and that he himself is into another body  
changed

He must say he did amiss, though he never did  
offend,

He must ask forgiveness, where he did no trespass,  
Or else be in trouble, care, and misery without end,  
And be cast in some arrearage without any grace,  
And that thing he saw done before his own face

He must by compulsion stiffly deny,  
And for fear, whether he woll or not, say *tongue,*  
*you lie !*

And in every faculty this thing is put in ure,  
And is so universal that I need no one to name,  
And, as I fear, is like evermore to endure,  
For it is in all faculties a common sport and game,  
The weaker to say as the stronger biddeth, or to  
have blame,

As a cunning sophist woll by argument bring to  
pass,

That the rude shall confess, and grant himself an  
ass

And this is the daily exercise and practise of their  
schools,

And not among them only, but also among all  
others

The stronger to compel, and make poor simple  
fools

To say as they command them in all manner  
matters  
I woll name none particular, but set them all  
together  
Without any exception , for I pray you show me  
one  
Amongst all in the world that seeth not such  
fashion

He that is stronger and more of power and might,  
If he be disposed to revenge his cause,  
Woll soon pick a quarrel, be it wrong or right,  
To the inferior and weaker for a couple of straws,  
And woll against him so extremely lay the laws,  
That he woll put him to the worse, either by false  
injury,  
Or by some craft and subtlety, or else by plain  
tyranny

As you saw right now by example plain  
Another fellow, being a counterfeit page,  
Brought the gentleman's servant out of his brain,  
And made him grant that himself was fallen in  
dotage  
Bearing himself in hand that he did rage,  
And when he could not bring that to pass by  
reason,  
He made him grant it, and say by compulsion

Therefore happy are they, that can beware  
Into whose hands they fall by any such chance ,  
Which if they do, they hardly escape care,  
Trouble, misery, and woeful grievance,  
And thus I make an end, committing you to his  
guidance,

That made and redeemed us all, and to you that  
be now here  
I pray God grant and send many a good new year !

FINIS <sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> [The colophon is Imprinted at London in Lothbury by  
me Wylliam Copland The only copy known, formerly  
Ingliss and Hebers, is now in the Devonshire collection  
The piece is undated, but it was licensed for the press in  
1562 3 ]



A PRETTY INTERLUDE,

CALLLED

NICE WANTON.



[Of this interlude only two copies have hitherto been discovered, one in the Devonshire collection, the second in the King's Library, British Museum, from the Roxburghe sale. An account of the piece, which has never been reprinted before, is given by Collier ("History of Dramatic Poetry," ii 381-3). Considering its rarity, early date, and curiosity, it is remarkable that "Nice Wanton" should have escaped Dodsley and his editors.]

# A PRETTY INTERLUDE,

## CALLLED

### NICE WANTON.

¶ Wherein ye may see  
 Three branches of an ill tree  
 The mother and her children three,  
 Two naught, and one godly

Early sharp, that will be thorn,  
 Soon ill, that will be naught  
 To be naught, better unborn,  
 Better untied than naughtily taught

*I't magnum magnos, pueros puerula doctus*

---

#### PERSONAGES

*The Messenger*

<i>Barnabas</i>		<i>Iniquity</i>
<i>Ismael</i>		<i>Barly en and</i>
<i>Dalilah</i>		<i>Xantippe</i>
<i>Eulalia</i>		<i>Worldly Shame</i>

*Daniel the Judge*

ANNO DOMINI, M D LX



## THE PROLOGUE

THE MESSENGER The prudent Prince Solomon  
doth say,  
He that spareth the rod, the child doth hate,  
He would youth should be kept in awe alway  
By correction in time at reasonable rate  
To be taught to fear God, and their parents  
obey,  
To get learning and qualities, thereby to maintain  
An honest quiet life, correspondent alway  
To God's law and the king's, for it is certain,  
If children be noseled <sup>1</sup> in idleness and ill,  
And brought up therein, it is hard to restrain,  
And draw them from natural wont evil,  
As here in this interlude ye shall see plain  
By two children brought up wantonly in play,  
Whom the mother doth excuse, when she should  
chastise,  
They delight in dalliance and mischief alway,  
At last they end their lives in miserable wise  
The mother persuaded by worldly shame,  
That she was the cause of their wretched life,  
So pensive, so sorrowful, for their death she be-  
came,  
That in despair she would sle herself with a knife  
Then her son Barnabas (by interpretation  
The son of comfort), her ill-purposed stay,  
By the scriptures he giveth her godly consolation,  
And so concludeth, all these parts will we play

---

<sup>1</sup> Nursled

BARNABAS *cometh*

BARNABAS My master, in my lesson yesterday,  
 Did recite this text of Ecclesiasticus  
 Man is prone to evil from his youth, did he say,  
 Which sentence may well be verified in us  
 Myself, my brother, and sister Dalilah,  
 Whom our parents to their cost to school do find  
 I tarry for them here, time passeth away,  
 I lose my learning, they ever loiter behind

If I go before, they do me threat  
 To complain to my mother she for their sake,  
 Being her tender tidlings,<sup>1</sup> will me beat  
 Lord, in this perplexity, what way shall I take?  
 What will become of them? grace God them send  
 To apply their learning, and their manners amend!

ISMAEL and DALILAH *come in singing*

*Here we comen, and here we lonen,<sup>2</sup>*

*And here we will abide abide-a*

BARNABAS Fye, brother, fye, and specially you,  
 sister Dalilah,  
 Soberness becometh maids alway

DALILAH What, ye dolt, ye be ever in one song!

ISMAEL Yea, sir, it shall cost you blows, ere it  
 be long

BARNABAS Be ye not ashamed the truands to  
 play,  
 Losing your time and learning, and that every day?  
 Learning bringeth knowledge of God and honest  
 living to get

DALILAH Yea, marry, I warrant you, master  
 hoddypeak

---

<sup>1</sup> [Pets See Halliwell's "Dictionary," v *Tiddle*]

<sup>2</sup> [I do not find this word in any other glossaries, but it  
 o. curs again below]

BARNABAS Learn apace, sister, and after to  
spin and sew,

And other honest housewifely points to know

ISMAEL Spin, quod-a<sup>2</sup> yea, by the mass, and  
with your heels up-wind,

For a good mouse-hunt is cat after Saint Kind<sup>1</sup>

BARNABAS Lewd speaking corrupteth good  
manners, Saint Paul doth say,

Come, let us go, if ye will, to school this day,

I shall be shent for tarrying so long,

[*Barnabas goeth out*

ISMAEL Go, get thee hence, thy mouth full of  
horse-dung<sup>1</sup>

Now, pretty sister, what sport shall we devise?

Thus palting<sup>2</sup> to school, I think us unwise

In summer die for thirst,<sup>3</sup> in winter for cold,

And still to live in fear of a churl who would?

DALILAH Not I, by the mass, I had rather be  
hanged were,

Than I would sit quaking like a mome for fear

I am sun-burned in summer, in winter the cold

Maketh my limbs gross, and my beauty decay,

If I should use it, as they would I should,

I should never be fair woman, I dare say

ISMAEL No, sister, no, but I can tell,

Where we shall have good cheer,

Lusty companions two or three,

At good wine, ale, and beer

DALILAH O good brother, let us go,

I will never go more to-to<sup>4</sup> school

Shall I never know,

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *Kynge*

<sup>2</sup> Trudging

<sup>3</sup> Thirst

<sup>4</sup> So in old copy, which is perhaps right *To to*, as an  
intensive, is a common form

What pastime meaneth ?

Yes, I will not be such a fool

ISMAEL Have with thee, Dahlah

Farewell our school !

Away with books and all,

*[They cast away their books]*

I will set my heart

On a merry pin,

Whatever shall befall

EULALIA Lord, what folly is in youth !

How unhappy be children now-a-days ?

And the more pity, to say the truth,

Their parents maintain them in evil ways

Which is a great cause that the world decays

For children, brought up in idleness and play,

Unthrifty and disobedient continue away

A neighbour of mine hath children hereby,

Idle, disobedient, proud, wanton, and nice

As they come by, they do shrewd turns daily,

Their parents so to suffer them surely be not wise

They laugh me to scorn, when I tell them mine  
advice,

I will speak with their elders and warn them  
neighbourly

Never in better time, their mother is hereby

*[Enter Xantippe]*

God save you, gossip, I am very fain,

That you chance now to come this way,

I long to talk with you a word or twain,

I pray you take it friendly that I shall say

Ismael your son and your daughter Dahlah

Do me shrewd turns daily more and more,

Chide and beat my children, it grieveth me sore

They swear, curse, and scold, as they go by the  
way,

Giving other ill ensample to do the same,

To God's displeasure and their hurt another day,

Chastise them for it, or else ye be to blame

XANTIPPE Tush, tush, if ye have no more  
than that to say,

Ye may hold your tongue and get ye away,

Alas, poor souls, they sit a-school all day

In fear of a churl, and if a little they play,

He beateth them like a devil, when they come  
home,

Your mistress-ship would have me lay on

If I should beat them, so oft as men complain,

By the mass, within this month I should make them  
lame

EULALIA Be not offended, I pray you, I must  
say more,

Your son is suspect light-fingered to be

Your daughter hath nice tricks three or four,

See to it in time, lest worse ye do see,

He that spareth the rod, hateth the child truly

Yet Salomon sober correction doth mean,

Not to beat and bounce them, to make them lame

XANTIPPE God thank you, mistress, I am well  
at ease

Such a fool to teach me, preaching as she please<sup>1</sup>

Dame, ye belie them deadly, I know plain

Because they go handsomely, ye disdain<sup>1</sup>

EULALIA Then on the other<sup>2</sup> as well would I  
complain,

But your other son is good, and no thanks to  
you<sup>1</sup>

These will ye make nought, by sweet Jesu

XANTIPPE Gup, har,<sup>3</sup> my childien nought ye lie

By your malice they shall not set a fly,

I have but one mome in comparison of his brother

Him the fool praiseth, and despiseth the other

---

<sup>1</sup> Are jealous of them

<sup>2</sup> Barnabas

<sup>3</sup> Old copy, *Guprade*



EULALIA Well, Xantippe, better in time than too late,  
 Seeing ye take it so, here my leave I take [*Erit*  
 XANTIPPE Marry, good leave have ye, the great  
 God be with you <sup>1</sup>  
 My children or I be cursed, I think,  
 They be complained on, wherever they go,  
 That for their pleasure they might drink  
 Nay, by this the poor souls be come from school  
 weary,  
 I will go get them meat to make them merry

INIQUITY, ISMAEL, and DALILAH *come in together*

INIQUITY *Lo, lo, here I bring-a*  
 ISMAEL *What is she, now ye have her?*  
 DALILAH *A lusty minion loner* <sup>1</sup>  
 INIQUITY *For no gold will I give her—*  
 ALL TOGETHER *Welcome, my honey-a!*  
 INIQUITY O my heart! [*Here he speaketh*  
 This wench can sing,  
 And play her part  
 DALILAH I am yours, and you mine, with all my  
 heart  
 INIQUITY By the mass, it is well sung,  
 Were ye not sorry ye were a maid so long?  
 DALILAH Fie, master Iniquity, fie, I am a maid  
 yet  
 ISMAEL No, sister, no, your maidenhead is sick  
 INIQUITY That knave your brother will be a  
 blab still,  
 I-wis, Dahlah, ye can say as much by him, if ye will  
 DALILAH By him, quod-a? he hath whores two  
 or three,

---

<sup>1</sup> This word, as a verb, has occurred above. It is evidently used in a bad sense, to signify an idle, *loafing* person

But ich tell your minion doll,<sup>1</sup> by Gog's body  
It skilleth not she doth hold you as much

ISMAEL Ye lie falsely, she will play me no such  
touch

DALILAH Not she? Yes, to do your heart good,  
I could tell you who putteth a bone in your hood!

ISMAEL Peace, whore, or ye bear me a box on<sup>2</sup>  
there—

DALILAH Here is mine ear, knave, strike, and  
thou dare!

To suffer him thus ye be no man,  
If ye will not revenge me, I will find one,  
To set so little by me ye were not wont—

Well, it is no matter,  
Though ye do, *ceteri nolunt*

INIQUITY Peace, Dalilah, speak ye Latin, poor  
fool?

DALILAH No, no, but a proverb I learned at  
school—

ISMAEL Yea, sister, you went to school, till ye  
were past giace,—

DALILAH Yea, so didst thou, by thy knave's  
face!

INIQUITY Well, no more a-do, let all this go,  
We kinsfolk must be friends, it must be so  
Come on, come on, come on,

[*He casteth dice on the board*  
Here they be that will do us all good

ISMAEL If ye use it long, your hair will grow  
through your hood

INIQUITY Come on, knave, with Christ's curse,  
I must have some of the money

Thou hast picked out of thy father's purse!

DALILAH He, by the mass, if he can get his  
purse,

---

<sup>1</sup> Mistress

<sup>2</sup> Old copy, an

Now and then he maketh it by half the worse

ISMAEL I defy you both, whore and knave—

INIQUITY What, ye princocks, begin ye to rave ?  
Come on—

DALILAH Master Iniquity, by your leave,  
I will play a crown or two here by your sleeve

ISMAEL Then be ye servant to a worshipful  
man,

Master Iniquity—a right name, by Saint John !

DALILAH What can ye say by Master Iniquity ?  
I love him and his name most heartily

INIQUITY God-a-mercy, Dalilah, good luck, I  
warrant thee,

I will shrive you both by and by [*He kisseth her*

ISMAEL Come on, but first let us have a song

DALILAH I am content, so that it be not long  
[*Iniquity and Dalilah sing*

INIQUITY *Gold locks,  
She must have knocks,  
Or else I do her wrong*

DALILAH *When ye have your will  
Ye were best lie still,  
The winter nights be long*

INIQUITY *When I ne may,  
Another assay ,  
I will take it for no wrong*

DALILAH *Then, by the rood,  
A bone in your hood  
I shall put, ere it be long*

ISMAEL She matcheth you, sirrah !

INIQUITY By Gog's blood, she is the best whore  
in England

DALILAH It is knavishly praised , give me your  
hand

INIQUITY I would thou hadst such another

ISMAEL By the mass, rather than forty pound  
brother

INIQUITY Here, sirs, come on, seven—

[*They set him*

Eleven<sup>1</sup> at all<sup>2</sup>—

ISMAEL Do ye nick us?<sup>3</sup> beknave your noly!—

INIQUITY Ten mine—

ISMAEL (*casteth dice*) Six mine,

Have at it, and it were for all my father's kine

It is lost by his wounds,<sup>4</sup> and ten to one!

INIQUITY Take the dice, Dalilah, cast on—

[*She casteth, and they set*

DALILAH Come on, five!

Thrive at fairest—

ISMAEL Gup, whore, and I at rest [*he loseth*]

By Gog's blood, I ween God and the devil be  
against me—

INIQUITY If th' one forsake thee, th' other will  
take thee!

ISMAEL Then is he a good fellow, I would not  
pass,<sup>5</sup>

So that I might bear a rule in hell, by the mass  
To toss firebrands at these pennyfathers'<sup>6</sup> pates,  
I would be porter, and receive them at the gates  
In boiling lead and brimstone I would seeth them  
each one

The knaves have all the money, good fellows have  
none

DALILAH Play, brother, have ye lost all your  
money now?

ISMAEL Yea, I thank that knave and such a  
whore as thou

'Tis no matter, I will have money, or I will sweat,

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *a leaven*

<sup>2</sup> Altogether

<sup>3</sup> *i.e.*, Do ye nick a cast? See Halliwell, *v Nick*, No 6

<sup>4</sup> *i.e.*, By God's wounds, a common phrase

<sup>5</sup> Care

<sup>6</sup> A term of contempt A skinflint, a curmudgeon

By Gog's blood, I will rob the next I meet—

Yea, and it be my father *[He goeth out]*

INIQUITY Thou boy, by the mass, ye will climb  
the ladder,

Ah, sirrah, I love a wench that can be wily,  
She perceived my mind with a twink of mine eye,  
If we two play boody on any man,  
We will make him as bare as Job anon,  
Well, Dalilah, let see what ye have won

*[They tell]*  
DALILAH Sir, I had ten shillings when I begon  
And here is all—every farthing

INIQUITY Ye lie like a whore, ye have won a  
pound !

DALILAH Then the devil strike me to the ground !

INIQUITY I will feel your pocket, by your leave,  
mistress—

DALILAH Away, knave, not mine, by the mass—

INIQUITY Yes, by God, and give you this to  
boot— *[He giveth her a box]*

DALILAH Out, whoreson knave, I beshrew thy  
heart-root !

Wilt thou rob me and beat me too ?

INIQUITY In the way of correction, but a blow  
or two !

DALILAH Correct thy dogs, thou shalt not beat  
me,

I will make you knave's flesh cut, I warrant thee

Ye think I have no friends, yes, I have in store

A good fellow or two, perchance more

Yea, by the mass, they shall box you for this gear,

A knave I found thee, a knave I leave thee here

*[She goeth out]*

INIQUITY Gup, whore, do ye hear this jade ?

Loving, when she is pleased

When she is angry, thus shrewd

Thief, brother sister, whore,

Two graffs of an ill tree,  
 I will tarry no longer here,  
 Farewell, God be with ye !      [*He goeth out*]

*DALILAH cometh in ragged, her face hid, or  
 disfigured, halting on a staff*

Alas, wretched wretch that I am,  
 Most miserable cartiff that ever was born,  
 Full of pain and sorrow, crooked and lorn  
 Stuff'd with diseases, in this world forlorn  
 My sinews be shrunken, my flesh eaten with pox  
 My bones full of ache and great pain  
 My head is bald, that bare yellow locks ,  
 Crooked I creep to the earth again  
 Mine eyesight is dim, my hands tremble and shake  
 My stomach abhorreth all kind of meat  
 For lack of clothes great cold I take,  
 When appetite serveth, I can get no meat  
 Where I was fair and amiable of face,  
 Now am I foul and horrible to see ,  
 All this I have deserved for lack of grace ,  
 Justly for my sins God doth plague me  
     My parents did tiddle<sup>1</sup> me they were to blame ,  
 Instead of correction, in ill did me maintain  
 I fell to<sup>2</sup> naught, and shall die with shame ,  
 Yet all this is not half of my grief and pain  
     The worm of my conscience, that shall never die,  
 Accuseth me daily more and more  
 So oft have I sinned wilfully,  
 That I fear to be damned evermore

*Enter BARNABAS*

BARNABAS   What woful wight art thou, tell  
 me,

---

<sup>1</sup> Pet, spoil

<sup>2</sup> Old copy, no

That here most grievously dost lament ?  
Confess the truth, and I will comfort thee,  
By the word of God omnipotent  
Although your time ye have misspent,  
Repent and amend, while ye have space,  
And God will restore you to health and grace

DALILAH To tell you who I am, I dare not for  
shame,

But my filthy living hath brought me in this case,  
Full oft for my wantonness you did me blame,  
Yet to take your counsel I had not the grace  
To be restored to health, alas, it is past,  
Disease hath brought me into such decay,  
Help me with your alms, while my life doth last,  
That, like a wretch as I am, I may go my way

BARNABAS Show me your name, sister, I you  
pray,

And I will help you now at your need,  
Both body and soul will I feed

DALILAH You<sup>1</sup> have named me already, if I  
durst be so bold

Your<sup>2</sup> sister Dalilah, that wretch I am,  
My wanton nice toys ye knew of old

Alas, brother, they have brought me to this shame

When you went to school, my brother and I  
would play,

Swear, chide, and scold with man and woman,

To do shrewd turns our delight was alway,

Yet were we tiddled, and you beaten now and then

Thus our parents let us do what we would,

And you by correction they kept thee under  
awe

When we grew big, we were sturdy and bold,

By father and mother we set not a straw,

Small matter for me, I am past,

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *your*

<sup>2</sup> Old copy, *you*

But your brother and mine is in great jeopardy

In danger to come to shame at the last,  
He frameth his living so wickedly

BARNABAS Well, sister,<sup>1</sup> I ever feared ye would  
be nought,

Your lewd behaviours sore grieve[d] my heart  
To train you to goodness all means have I sought,  
But in vain, yet will I play a brotherly part

For the soul is more precious, most dearly bought  
With the blood of Christ, dying therefore  
To save it first a mean must be sought

At God's hand by Christ, man's only Saviour

Consider, Dalilah, God's fatherly goodness,  
Which for your good hath brought you in this case  
Scourged you with his rod of pure love doubtless,  
That, once knowing yourself, ye might call for grace

Ye seem to repent, but I doubt whether<sup>2</sup>  
For your sins or for the misery ye be in  
Earnestly repent for your sin rather,  
For these plagues be but the reward of sin

But so repent that ye sin no more,  
And then believe with steadfast faith,  
That God will forgive you for evermore,  
For Christ's sake, as the scripture saith

As for your body, if it be curable,  
I will cause to be healed, and<sup>3</sup> during your life  
I will clothe you and feed you, as I am able  
Come, sister, go with me, ye have need of relief

[*They go out*]

DANIEL (*the judge*) As a judge of the country,  
here am I come,  
Sent by the king's majesty, justice to do

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *siker*, & c., certainly, securely

<sup>2</sup> Old copy, *whater*.

<sup>3</sup> Old copy, or





If ye do not after me, ye will be hanged, I dare  
say,

If thou tell no tales, but hold thy tongue,  
I will set thee at liberty, ere it be long,  
Though thou be judged to die anon

JUDGE (*to the jury*) Come on, sirs, I pray you,  
come on,  
Be you all agreed in one ?

QU Yea, my lord, everychone

[*One of them speaketh for the quest*

JUDGE Where Ismael was indicted<sup>1</sup> by twelve  
men

Of felony, burglary, and murder,  
As the indictment declareth how, where, and when,  
Ye heard it read to you lately in order  
You, with the rest, I trust all true men,  
Be charged upon your oaths to give verdict directly,  
Whether Ismael thereof be guilty or not guilty

QU Guilty, my lord, and most guilty

[*One for the rest*

INIQUITY Wilt thou hang, my lord, [this] whore-  
son noddy ?

JUDGE (*to Iniquity*) Tush, hold thy tongue, and  
I warrant thee<sup>2</sup>—

JUDGE (*to Ismael*) The Lord have mercy upon  
thee !

Thou shalt go to the place thou cam'st fro  
Till to-morrow, nine of the clock, there to remain  
To the place of execution then shalt thou go,  
There be hanged to death, and after again,  
Being dead, for ensample to be hanged in a chain  
Take him away, and see it be done,  
At your peril that may fall thereupon

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *intided*

<sup>2</sup> In the old copy, this and the following line are trans-  
posed, and some of the speeches are wrongly addressed.

ISMAEL Though I be judged to die, I requere  
 respite,  
 For the king's advantage some<sup>1</sup> things I can recite  
 INIQUITY Away with him, he will speak but of  
 spite—

JUDGE Well, we will hear you say what you  
 can,  
 But see that ye wrongfully accuse no man  
 ISMAEL I will belie no man, but this I may  
 say,

Here standeth he that brought me to this way  
 INIQUITY My lord, he lieth like a damned knave,  
 The fear of death doth make him rave—

ISMAEL His naughty company and play at dice  
 Did me first to stealing entice  
 He was with me at robberies, I say it to his face ,  
 Yet can I say more in time and space

INIQUITY Thou hast said too much, I beshrew  
 thy whoreson's face [Aside

Hang him, my lord, out of the way,  
 The thief careth not what he doth say  
 Let me be hangman, I will teach him a sleight ,  
 For fear of talking, I will strangle him straight ,  
 Tarry here that list, for I will go— [He would go

JUDGE No, no, my friend, not so ,  
 I thought always ye should not be good,  
 And now it will prove, I see, by the rood  
 [They take him in a halter, he fighteth with  
 them

Take him, and lay him in irons strong,  
 We will talk with you more, ere it be long  
 INIQUITY He that layeth hands on me in this  
 place,

Ich lay my brawling iron on his face !  
 By Gog's blood, I defy thy worst ,

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *in*

If thou shouldest hang me, I were accurst  
 I have been at as low an ebb as this,  
 And quickly aloft again, by Gis<sup>1</sup>  
 I have no friends than ye think I have,  
 I am entertained of all men like no slave  
 Yea, within this moneth, I may say to you,  
 I will be your servant and your master too  
 Yea, creep into your breast, will ye have it so?

JUDGE Away with them both, lead them away  
 At his death tell me what he doth say,  
 For then belike he will not lie

INIQUITY I care not for you both, no, not a fly!  
*[They lead them out]*

JUDGE If no man have here more matter to say,  
 I must go hence some other way *[He goeth out]*

*Enter* WORLDLY SHAME

WORLDLY SHAME Ha, ha! though I come in  
 rudely, be not aghast,  
 I must work a feat in all the haste,  
 I have caught two birds, I will set for the dame,  
 If I catch her in my clutch, I will her tame

Of all this while know ye not my name?<sup>2</sup>  
 I am right worshipful master Worldly Shame,  
 The matter that I come now about,  
 Is even this, I put you out of doubt—

There is one<sup>1</sup> Xantippe, a curst shrew,  
 I think all the world doth her know,  
 Such a jade she is, and so curst a quean,  
 She would out-scold the devil's dame, I ween

Sirs, this fine woman had babes three,  
 Twain the dearest darlings that might be,  
 Ismael and fair Dählah these two  
 With the lout Barnabas I have nothing to do

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, none

All was good, that these tiddlings do might  
Swear, lie, steal, scold, or fight  
Cards, dice, kiss, clip, and so forth

All this our mammy would take in good worth

Now, sir, Dahilah my daughter is dead of the pox,  
And my son hang'th<sup>1</sup> in chains, and waveth his  
locks

These news will I tell her, and the matter so frame,  
That she shall be thine own, master Worldly  
Shame!

Ha, ha, ha!—

XANTIPPE Peace, peace, she cometh hereby,  
I spoke no word of hei, no, not I,

O Mistress Xantippe, I can tell you news<sup>2</sup>  
The fair wench, your dear daughter Dahilah,  
Is dead of the pox taken at the stews,  
And thy son Ismael, that pretty boy,  
Whom I dare say you loved very well,  
Is hanged in chains, every<sup>3</sup> man can tell  
Every man saith thy daughter was a strong whore,  
And thy son a strong thief and a murderer  
It must needs grieve you wonderous,  
That they died so shamefully both two  
Men will taunt you and mock you, for they say now  
The cause of their death was even very you.

XANTIPPE. I the cause of their death?

[*She would sowne*<sup>4</sup>

WORLDLY SHAME Will ye sowne, the devil stop  
thy breath?

Thou shalt die (I trow) with more shame,  
I will get me hence out of the way,  
If the whore should die, men would me blame,  
That I killed her, knaves should say [Exit

XANTIPPE Alas, alas, and well-away!

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *hanged*

<sup>3</sup> Old copy, *ever*.

<sup>2</sup> Old copy, *neder*

<sup>4</sup> Swoon

I may curse the time that I was born,  
 Never woman had such fortune, I dare say,  
 Alas, two of my children be forlorn

My fair daughter Dalilah is dead of the pox  
 My dear son Ismael hanged up in chains  
 Alas, the wind waveth his yellow locks,<sup>1</sup>  
 It slayeth my heart, and breaketh my brains

Why should God punish and plague me so sore?  
 To see my children die so shamefully!

I will never eat bread in this world more,  
 With this knife will I slay myself by and by

*[She would stick herself with a knife]*

*Enter BARNABAS*

BARNABAS Beware what ye do, fy, mother, fy!  
 Will ye spill yourself for your own offence,  
 And seem for ever to exclude God's mercy?  
 God doth punish you for your negligence  
 Wherefore take his correction with patience,  
 And thank him heartily, that of his goodness  
 He bringeth you in knowledge of your trespass

For when my brother and sister were of young  
 age,

Ye saw they were given to idleness and play,  
 Would apply no learning, but live in outrage

And men complained on them every day  
 Ye winked at their faults, and tiddled them away,  
 By maintenance they grew to mischief and ill,  
 So at last God's justice did<sup>2</sup> them both spill

In that God preserved me, small thank to you  
 If God had not given me special grace,  
 To avoid evil and do good, this is true,

---

<sup>1</sup> See Hazlitt's "Popular Poetry," iv 239 The term *goldyllocks*, curiously enough, seems to have been in early use in a contemptuous or bad sense

<sup>2</sup> Old copy, *bid*

I had lived and died in as wretched case,  
 As they did, for I had both suffrance and space,  
 But it is an old proverb, you have heard it, I think  
 That God will have see, shall not wink.

Yet in this we may all take comfort  
 They took great repentance, I heard say,  
 And as for my sister, I am able to report,  
 She lamented for her sins to her dying day  
 To repent and believe I exhorted her alway,  
 Before her death she believed, that God of his  
 mercy,

For Christ's sake would save her eternally  
 If you do even so, ye need not despair,  
 For God will freely remit your sins all,  
 Christ hath paid the ransom, why should ye fear?  
 To believe this and do well, to God for grace call  
 All worldly cares let pass and fall,  
 And thus comfort my father I pray you heartily,

*[Xantippe goeth out]*

I have a little to say, I will come by and by  
 Right gentle audience, by this interlude ye may  
 see,

How dangerous it is for the frailty of youth,  
 Without good governance, to live at liberty,  
 Such chances as these oft happen of truth  
 Many miscarry, it is the more ruth,  
 By negligence of their elders and not taking pain,  
 In time good learning and qualities to attain

Therefore exhort I all parents to be diligent  
 In bringing up their children aye<sup>2</sup> to be circumspect,  
 Lest they fall to evil, be not negligent,  
 But chastise them, before they be sore infect  
 Accept their well-doing, in ill them reject  
 A young plant ye may plant and bow as ye will,  
 Where it groweth strong, there will it abide still

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *exhorting*

<sup>2</sup> Old copy, *yea*





*Who hath a pure conscience, tell me ?  
 No man of himself, I ensure thee,  
 Then must it follow of necessity,  
 That no man can be merry*

*Purity itself may pureness give,  
 You must ask it of God in true belief  
 Then will he give it, and none reprove <sup>1</sup>  
 And so we may be merry*

*What is the practice of a conscience pure ?  
 To love and fear God, and other allure,  
 And for his sake to help his neighbour  
 Then may he well be merry*

*What shall we have, that can and will do this ?  
 After this life everlasting bliss,  
 Yet not by desert, but by gift, & wis  
 There God make us all merry !*

FINIS <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Reprove

<sup>2</sup> The colophon is Imprinted at London, in Paules  
 Church yearde at the Sygne of the Swane by John Kjing

THE HISTORY  
OF  
JACOB AND ESAU

## EDITION

*A neue mery and wittie Comedie or Enterlude, newly imprinted, treating vpon the Historie of Iacob and Esau, taken out of the xxvij Chap of the first booke of Moses entituled Genesis Imprinted at London by Henrie Bynneman, dwelling in Knight-rider Streete, at the signe of the Mermayde Anno Domini 1568 4to*

This piece is placed earlier in the series than the mere date of publication given above would warrant, because the interlude was licensed in 1557-8, and probably published in pursuance of its registration at Stationers' Hall. The 4to of 1568 is, however, the only impression hitherto recovered, and it is of the greatest rarity. An account of this dramatic curiosity will be found in Collier's "History of English Dramatic Poetry," 1831. It is now for the first time reprinted.

THE PARTS AND NAMES OF THE PLAYERS  
 WHO ARE TO BE CONSIDERED TO BE HEBREWS, AND  
 SO SHOULD BE APPARELLED WITH ATTIRE

1 THE PROLOGUE, <i>a Poet</i>	7 HANAN, <i>a neighbour to Isaac also</i>
2 ISAAC, <i>an old man, father to Jacob and Esau</i>	8 RAGAN, <i>servant unto Esau</i>
3 REBECCA, <i>an old woman, wife to Isaac</i>	9 MIDO, <i>a little boy, leading Isaac</i>
4 ESAU, <i>a young man and a hunter</i>	10 DEBORAH, <i>the nurse of Isaac's tent</i>
5 JACOB, <i>a young man of godly conversation</i>	11 ABRA, <i>a little wench, servant to Rebecca</i>
6 ZEPHAR, <i>a neighbour</i>	

## PROLOGUE OF THE PLAY

In the book of Genesis it is expressed,  
That when God to Abraham made sure promise,  
That in his seed all nations should be blessed  
To send him a son by Sarah he did not miss  
Then to Isaac (as there recorded it is)  
By Rebecca his wife, who had long time been  
barren,  
When pleased him, at one birth he sent sons twain

But before Jacob and Esau yet born were,  
Or had either done good, or ill perpetrate  
As the prophet Malachi and Paul witness bear,  
Jacob was chosen, and Esau reprobate  
Jacob I love (saith God) and Esau I hate  
For it is not (saith Paul) in man's renewing or will,  
But in God's mercy, who chooseth whom he will

But now for our coming we shall exhibit here,  
Of Jacob and Esau how the story was,  
Whereby God's adoption may plainly appear  
And also that, whatever God's ordinance was,  
Nothing might defeat, but that it must come to  
pass  
That, if this story may your eyes or ears delight,  
We pray you of patience, while we it recite

# THE HISTORY OF JACOB AND ESAU



## ACTUS PRIMA. SCÆNA PRIMA

RAGAN, *the servant*

ESAU, *a young man, his master*

[*Ragan entereth with his horn at his back and his hunting staff in his hand, and leadeth three greyhounds, or one, as may be gotten*

Now let me see what time it is by the starlight ?  
God's for his grace, man, why it is not yet mid-  
night !

We might have slept these four hours yet, I dare  
well say ,

But this is our good Esau his common play

[*Here he counterferteth how his master calleth him  
up in the mornings, and of his answers*

What the devil aileth him ? now truly, I think  
plain,

He hath either some worms or botts in his brain  
He scarcely sleepeth twelve good hours in two  
weeks

I wot well his watching maketh me have lean  
cheeks,

For there is none other life with him day by day,  
But, up, Ragan ! up, drowsy hogshead ! I say

Why, when<sup>2</sup> up, will it not be<sup>2</sup> up I come anon  
Up, or I shall raise you in faith, ye drowsy  
whoreson

Why, when<sup>2</sup> shall I fet you<sup>2</sup> I come, sir, by  
and by

Up, with a wild wanion<sup>1</sup> how long wilt thou lie<sup>2</sup>

Up, I say, up, at once<sup>1</sup> up, up, let us go hence

It is time we were in the forest an hour since

Now the devil stop that same yalling throat  
(think I)

Somewhiles for from the call<sup>1</sup> farewell all wink of  
eye<sup>1</sup>

Begin he once to call, I sleep no more that stound,  
Though half an hour's sleep were worth ten thou-  
sand pound

Anon, when I come in, and bid him good morrow

Ah sir, up at last<sup>2</sup> the devil give thee sorrow<sup>1</sup>

Now the devil break thy neck (think I by and by),

That hast no wit to sleep, nor in thy bed to lie

Then come on at once, take my quiver and my  
bow,

Fet Lovel my hound, and my horn to blow

Then forth go we fasting an hour or two ere day,

Before we may well see either our hands or way,

And there range we the wild forest, no crumb of  
bread

From morning to stark night coming within our  
head,

Sometimes Esau's self will faint for drink and  
meat,

So that he would be glad of a dead horse to eat

Yet of fresh the next morrow forth he will again,

And sometime not come home in a whole night or  
twain

Nor no delight he hath, no appetite nor mind.

---

<sup>1</sup> From the time he calls

But to the wild forest, to hunt the hart or hind,  
The roebuck, the wild boar, the fallow-deer, or  
hare

But how poor Ragan shall dine, he hath no care  
Poor I must eat acorns or berries from the tree  
But if I be found slack in the suit following,  
Or if I do fail in blowing or hallooing,  
Or if I lack my staff or my horn by my side  
He will be quick enough to fume, chafe, and chide  
Am I not well at ease such a master to serve,  
As must have such service, and yet will let me  
starve?

But, in faith, his fashions displease mo than me,  
And will have but a mad end one day, we shall see  
He passeth nothing on Rebecca his mother,  
And much less passeth he on Jacob his brother  
But peace, mum, no more I see master Esau

*[Here Esau appeareth in sight, and bloweth his  
horn, ere he enter*

ESAU How now, are we all ready, servant  
Ragan?

Ait thou up for all day, man? art thou ready now?

RAGAN I have been here this half hour, sir,  
waiting for you,

ESAU And is all thing ready, as I bad, to my  
mind?

RAGAN Ye have no cause, that I know, any  
fault to find

Except that we disease our tent and neighbours  
all

With rising over early each day, when ye call

ESAU Ah, thou drowsy draffsack, wouldst thou  
rise at noon?

Nay, I trow the sixth hour with thee were over-  
soon

RAGAN Nay, I speak of your neighbours, being  
men honest,



That labour all the day, and would fain be at rest  
Whom with blowing your horn ye disease all-  
abouts

ESAU What care I for waking a sort of clubbish  
louts?

RAGAN And I speak of Rebecca your mother,  
our dame

ESAU Tut, I pass not, whether she do me praise  
or blame

RAGAN And I speak of your good father, old  
Isaac

ESAU Peace, foolish knave as for my father  
Isaac,

In case he be asleep, I do him not disease,  
And if he be waking, I know I do him please,  
For he loveth me well from mine nativity,

*[Here Esau bloweth his horn again]*

And never so as now for mine activity  
Therefore have at it once more will I blow my  
horn

To give my neighbour louts an hail-peal in a morn

*[Here he speaketh to his dogs]*

Now, my master Lightfoot, how say you to this  
gear,

Will you do your duty to red or fallow deer?

And, Swan, mine own good cur, I do think in my  
mind

The game shall run apace, if thou come far behind  
And ha, Takepart, come, Takepart, here how say  
you, child,

Wilt not thou do thy part? yes, else I am beguil'd  
But I shrew your cheeks, they have had too much  
meat

RAGAN I blame not dogs to take it, if they may  
it get

But as for my part, they could have, pardè,  
A small remnant of that that ye give me

They may run light enough for ought of me they  
got,

I had not a good meal's-meat this week, that I wot  
ESAU If we have luck this day to kill hare,  
teg,<sup>1</sup> or doe,

Thou shalt eat thy bellyful, till thou cniest ho

RAGAN I thank you, when I have it, Master  
Esau

ESAU Well, come on, let us go now, servant  
Ragan

Is there anything more, that I should say or do ?

Fo! perhaps we come not again this day or two

RAGAN I know nothing, master, to God I make  
a vow,

Except you would take your brother Jacob with  
you

I never yet saw him with you an hunting go,

Shall we prove him once, whether he will go or no ?

ESAU No, no, that were in vain, alas, good  
simple mome

Nay, he must tarry and suck mother's dug at home  
Jacob must keep home, I trow, under mother's  
wing,

To be from the tents he loveth not of all thing

Jacob loveth no hunting in the wild forest

And would fear, if he should there see any wild  
beast

Yea, to see the game run, Jacob would be in fear

RAGAN In good sooth, I ween he would think  
each hare a bear

ESAU What, brother mine, what a word call ye  
that ?

RAGAN Sir, I am scarce waked I spake, ere I  
wist what

---

<sup>1</sup> A young deer "Tegge or pricket, saillant"—Pals  
grave's *Eclaircissement*, 1530 (edit 1852, p 279)

ESAU Come on your ways, my child, take the  
law of the game  
I will wake you, I trow, and set your tongue in  
frame

RAGAN O, what have you done, Master Esau,  
God's apes?

ESAU Why can ye not yet refrain from letting  
such scapes?

Come on, ye must have three jerks<sup>1</sup> for the nonce  
One—

[*Beats him*  
RAGAN O, for God's love, sir, have done, dis-  
patch at once

ESAU Nay there is no remedy but bide it—  
there is twain

[*Gives him another jerk*  
RAGAN O, ye rent my cheverel, let me be past  
my pain

ESAU Take heed of hunting terms fro hence-  
forth!—there is three

[*Jerks him again*  
RAGAN Whoop! now a mischief on all moping  
fools for me!

Jacob shall keep the tents ten year for Ragan,  
Ere I move again that he hunt with Esau

ESAU Come on, now let us go God send us  
game and luck,

And if my hand serve me well—

RAGAN (*aside*) Ye will kill a duck  
[*Exeant ambo*

## ACTUS PRIMI, SCÆNA SECUNDA

HANAN, ZETHAR, *two of Isaac's neighbours*

HANAN Ah, sir, I see I am an early man this  
morn,

I am once more beguil'd with Esau his horn

---

<sup>1</sup> Jerks with the whip

But there is no such stinner as Esau is  
He is up day by day, before the crow piss  
Then maketh he with his horn such toohing and  
blowing,

And with his wide throat such shouting and  
hallooing,

That no neighbour shall in his tent take any rest,  
From Esau addresseth him to the forest

So that he maketh us, whether we will or no,  
Better husbands than we would be, abroad to go

Each of us about our business and our wark

But whom do I see yonder coming in the dark?

It is my neighbour Zethar, I perceive him now

ZETHAR What, neighbour Hanan, well met,  
good morrow to you

I see well now I am not beguiled alone

But what boot to he still? for rest we can take  
none,

That I marvel much of old father Isaac,  
Being so godly a man, why he is so slack

To bring his son Esau to a better stay

HANAN What should he do in the matter, I you  
pray?

ZETHAR O, it is no small charge to fathers, afore  
God,

So to train their children in youth under the rod  
That, when they come to age, they may virtue  
ensue,

Wicked pranks abhor, and all lewdness eschew,  
And me-thinketh Isaac, being a man as he is—

A chosen man of God, should not be slack in this

HANAN Alack, good man, what should he do  
more than he hath done?

I dare say no father hath better taught his son,  
Nor no two have given better example of life  
Unto their children than both he and his wife  
As by their younger son Jacob it doth appear

He liveth no loose life he doth God love and fear  
He keepeth here in the tents, like a quiet man  
He giveth not himself to wildness any when  
But Esau evermore from his young childhood  
Hath been like to prove ill, and never to be good  
Young it pricketh (folks do say), that will be a  
thorn,

Esau hath been naught, ever since he was born  
And whereof cometh this<sup>?</sup> of education?

Nay, it is of his own ill inclination  
They were brought up both under one tuition,  
But they be not both of one disposition  
Esau is given to loose and lewd living

ZETHAR In faith, I warrant him [to] have but  
shrewd thriving

HANAN Neither see I any hope, that he will  
amend

ZETHAR Then let him even look to come to an  
ill end

For youth that will follow none but their own  
bridle,

That leadeth a dissolute life and an idle  
Youth, that refuseth wholesome documents,  
Or to take example of their godly parents  
Youth, that is itchless, and taketh no regard,  
What become of themselves, nor which end go for-  
ward

It is great marvel and a special grace,  
If ever they come to goodness all their life space  
But why do we consume this whole morning in  
talk

Of one that hath no reck ne care, what way he  
walk,

We had been as good to have kept our bed still

HANAN O, it is our part to lament them that do  
ill

Like as very nature a godly heart doth move

JACOB AND ESAU

Others' good proceedings to tender and to love  
So such as in no wise to goodness will be brought,  
What good man but will moun, since God us all  
hath wrought,  
But ye have some business, and so have I  
ZETHAR And we have been long, farewell,  
neighbour, heartily

ACTUS PRIMI, SCÆNA TERTIA

REBECCA, *the mother*      JACOB, *the son*

REBECCA Come forth, son Jacob, why tarriest  
thou behind?

JACOB Forsooth, mother, I thought ye had said  
all your mind

REBECCA Nay, come, I have yet a word or two  
more to say

JACOB Whatsoever pleaseth you, speak to me  
ye may

REBECCA Seeing thy brother Esau is such an  
one,

Why rebukest thou him not, when ye are alone?

Why dost thou not give him some good sad wise  
counsel?

JACOB He lacketh not that, mother, if it would  
avail

But when I do him any thing of his fault[s] tell,  
He calleth me foolish proud boy, with him to mell  
He will sometime demand, by what authority  
I presume to teach them which mine elders be?  
He will sometime ask, if I learn of my mother  
To take on me teaching of mine elder brother?  
Sometime, when I tell him of his lewd behaviour,  
He will lend me a mock or twain for my labour  
And sometime for anger he will out with his purse,

And call me, as please him, and swear he will do  
worse

REBECCA O Lord, that to bear such a son it was  
my chance

JACOB Mother, we must be content with God's  
ordinance

REBECCA Or, if I should need have Esau to my  
son,  
Would God thou, Jacob, haddest the eldership  
won

JACOB Mother, it is too late to wish, for that  
is pass'd,  
It will not be done now, wish ye never so fast  
And I would not have you to wish against God's  
will

For both it is in vain, and also it is ill

REBECCA Why did it not please God, that thou  
shouldest as well

Tread upon his crown, as hold him fast by the  
heel?

JACOB Whatsoever mystery the Lord therein  
meant,  
Must be referred to his unsearched judgment  
And whatsoever he hath 'ppointed me unto,  
I am his own vessel, his will with me to do

REBECCA Well, some strange thing therein of  
God intended was

JACOB And what he hath decreed, must sure  
come to pass

REBECCA I remember, when I had you both  
conceived,

A voice thus saying from the Lord I received  
Rebecca, in thy womb are now two nations  
Of unlike natures and contrary fashions  
The one shall be a mightier people elect  
And the elder to the younger shall be subject  
I know this voice came not to me of nothing

Therefore thou shalt follow my counsel in one thing

JACOB So it be not displeasing to the Lord, I must

REBECCA I fear the Lorde eke, who is merciful and just

And loth would I be his majesty to offend,  
But by me (I doubt not) to work he doth intend  
Assay, if thou canst at some one time or other,  
To buy the right of eldership from thy brother  
Do thou buy the birthright, that to him doth belong,

So may'st thou have the blessing, and do him no wrong

What thou hast once bought, is thine own of due right

JACOB Mother Rebecca, if withouten fraud I might,

I would your advice put in ure with all my heart,  
But I may not attempt any such guileful part  
To buy my brother's eldership and his birth-right,

I fear, would be a great offence in God's sight  
Which thing, if I wist to redeem, I ne would,  
Though I might get thereby ten millions of gold

REBECCA God who, by his word and almighty decree,

Hath appointed thee Esau his lord to be,  
Hath appointed some way to have it brought about  
And that is this way, my sprite doth not doubt

JACOB Upon your word, mother, I will assay ere long,

Yet it grudgeth my heart to do my brother wrong

REBECCA Thou shalt do no wrong, son Jacob, on my peril

JACOB Then, by God's leave, once assay I will

REBECCA Then farewell, dear son, God's blessing and mine with thee



JACOB I will again to the tent Well you be !  
[*Exeat Jacob*]

REBECCA Ah, my sweet son Jacob, good fortune God thee send !

The most gentle young man alive, as God me mend !

And the most natural to father and mother  
O, that such a meek spirit were in thy brother ,  
Or thy sire loved thee, as thou hast merited,  
And then should Esau soon be disinherited

### ACTUS PRIMI, SCÆNA QUARTA

ISAAC, *the husband* REBECCA, *the wife* MIDO,  
*the lad that leadeth blind Isaac*

ISAAC Where art thou, my boy Mido, when I do thee lack ?

MIDO Who calleth Mido ? here, good master Isaac

ISAAC Come, lead me forth of doors a little, I thee pray

MIDO Lay your hand on my shoulder, and come on this way

REBECCA Now, O Lord of heaven, the fountain of all grace,

If it be thy good will, that my will shall take place

Send success to Jacob, according to thy word,

That his elder brother may serve him as his lord

MIDO Sir, whither would ye go, now that abroad ye be ?

ISAAC To wife Rebecca

MIDO Yonder I do her see

REBECCA Lord, thou knowest Jacob to be thy servant true,

And Esau all froward thy ways to ensue

MIDO Yonder she is speaking, whatever she  
doth say  
By holding up her hands, it seemeth she doth  
pray

ISAAC Where be ye, wife Rebecca ? where be  
ye, woman ?

REBECCA Who is that calleth ? Isaac, my good  
man ?

ISAAC Where be ye, wife Rebecca, let me  
understand ?

MIDO She cometh to you apace

REBECCA Here, my lord, at hand

ISAAC Saving that whatsoever God doth is all  
right,

No small grief it were for a man to lack his sight  
But what the Lord doth send or work by his high  
will—

REBECCA Cannot but be the best, no such thing  
can be ill

ISAAC All bodily punishment or infirmity  
With all maims of nature, whatever they be,  
Yea, and all other afflictions temporal  
As loss, persecution, or troubles mortal,  
Are nothing but a trial or probation  
And what is he that firmly trusteth in the Lord,  
Or steadfastly believeth his promise and word,  
And knoweth him to be the God omnipotent,  
That feedeth and governeth all that he hath sent  
Protecting his faithful in every degree,  
And them to relieve in all their necessity ?  
What creature (I say) that doth this understand,  
Will not take all thing in good heart at God's  
hand ?

Shall we at God's hand receive prosperity,  
And not be content likewise with adversity ?  
We ought to be thankful whatever God doth send,  
And ourselves wholly to his will to commend

REBECCA So should it be, and I thank my lord  
Isaac,

Such daily lessons at your hand I do not lack

ISAAC Why, then, should not I thank the Lord,  
if it please him,

That I shall now be blind, and my sight wax all dim  
For whoso to old age will here live and endure,  
Must of force abide all such defaults of nature

MIDO Why, must I be blind too, if I be an old  
man ?

How shall I grope the way, or who shall lead me  
then ?

ISAAC If the Lord have appointed thee such old  
days to see,

He will also provide that shall be meet for thee

MIDO I trow, if I were blind, I could go well  
enou',

I could grope the way thus, and go as I do now  
I have done so ere now both by day and by night,  
As I see you grope the way, and have hit it right

REBECCA Yea, sir boy, will ye play any such  
childish knack

As to counterfeit your blind master Isaac ?

That is but to mock him for his impediment

MIDO Nay, I never did it in any such intent.

REBECCA Nay, it is to tempt God, before thou  
have need,

Whereby thou may'st provoke him, in very deed,  
With some great misfortune or plague to punish  
thee

MIDO Then will I never more do so, while I  
may see

But against I be blind, I will be so perfit

That, though no man lead me, I will go at mid-  
night

ISAAC Now, wife, touching the purpose that I  
sought for you

REBECCA What say'th my lord Isaac to his  
handmaid now?

ISAAC Ye have oft in covert words been right  
earnest

To have me grant unto you a boon and request  
But ye never told me yet plainly what it was,  
Therefore I have ever yet let the matter pass  
And now of late, by oft being from me absent,  
I have half suspected you to be scarce content  
But, wife Rebecca, I would not have you to mourn  
As though I did your honest petition scorn<sup>1</sup>  
For I never meant to deny in all my life  
Any lawful or honest request to my wife  
But in case it be a thing unreasonable,  
Then must I needs be to you untractable  
Now therefore say on, and tell me what is your  
case

REBECCA I would, if I were sure in your heart  
to find grace,  
Else, sir, I would be loth

ISAAC To speak do not refrain  
And if it be reasonable, ye shall obtain  
Otherwise, ye must pardon me, gentle sweet wife

REBECCA Sir, ye know your son Esau, and see  
his life,

How loose it is, and how stiff he is and stubborn  
How retchlessly he doth himself misgovern  
He giveth himself to hunting out of reason,  
And serveth the Lord and us at no time or season  
These conditions cannot be acceptable  
In the sight of God, nor to men allowable  
Now his brother Jacob, your younger son and mine  
Doth more apply his heart to seek the ways divine  
He liveth here quietly at home in the tent,  
There is no man nor child but is with him content

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *would ne*

ISAAC O wife, I perceive ye speak of affection,  
To Jacob ye bear love, and to his brother none

REBECCA Indeed, sir, I cannot love Esau so  
well

As I do Jacob, the plain truth to you to tell  
For I have no comfort of Esau, God wot  
I scarce know whe'r I have a son of him or not  
He goeth abroad so early before daylight,  
And returneth home again so late in the night,  
And unneth I set eye on him in the whole week  
No, sometime not in twain, though I do for him  
seek

And all the neighbours see him as seldom as I,  
But when they would take rest, they hear him  
blow and cry

Some see him so seldom, they ask if he be sick  
Sometimes some demand, whether he be dead or  
quick

But, to make short tale, such his conditions be,  
That I wish of God he had ne'er been born of me

ISAAC Well, wife, I love Esau, and must for  
causes twain

REBECCA Surely your love is bestowed on him  
in vain?

ISAAC First, active he is, as any young man can  
be,

And many a good morsel he bringeth home to me  
Then he is mine eldest and first-begotten son

REBECCA If God were so pleased, I would that  
were foredone

ISAAC And the eldest son is called the father's  
might

REBECCA If yours rest in Esau, God give us  
good night!

ISAAC A prerogative he hath in every thing

REBECCA More pity he should have it without  
deserving

ISAAC Of all the goods his portion is greater  
REBECCA That the worthy should have it, I  
think much better

ISAAC Among his biethien he hath the pre-  
eminence

REBECCA Where Esau is chief, there is a gay  
presence !

ISAAC Over his brethren he is sovereign and  
lord

REBECCA Such dignity in Esau doth ill accord

ISAAC He is the head of the father's succession

REBECCA I would Esau had lost that posses-  
sion

ISAAC And he hath the chief title of inherit-  
ance

REBECCA Wisdom would in Esau change that  
ordinance

ISAAC To the eldest son is due the father's  
blessing

REBECCA That should be Jacob's, if I might  
have my wishing

[*Aside*

ISAAC And the chief endowment of the father's  
substance

REBECCA Which will thrive well in Esau his  
governance

ISAAC By title of eldership he hath his birth-  
right

REBECCA And that would I remove to Jacob,  
if I might

[*Aside*

ISAAC He must have double portion to another

REBECCA That were more fit for Jacob his  
younger brother

ISAAC In all manner of things divided by a  
rate

REBECCA Well given goods to him, that the  
Lord doth hate !

ISAAC Why say ye so of Esau, mine eldest son ?

REBECCA I say true, if he proceed, as he hath begun

ISAAC Is he not your son too, as well as he is mine ?

Wherefore do ye then against him thus sore repine ?

REBECCA Because that in my spirit verily I know,

God will set up Jacob, and Esau down throw  
I have showed you many a time ere this day,  
What the Lord of them being in my womb did say  
I use not for to he, and I believe certain,  
That the Lord spake not these words to me in vain  
And Jacob it is (I know), in whom the Lord will  
His promises to you made and to your seed fulfil

ISAAC I doubt not his promise made to me and my seed,

Leaving to his conveyance how it shall proceed  
The Lord after his way may change th'inheritance,  
But I may not wittingly break our ordinance

REBECCA Now would God I could persuade my lord Isaac

Jacob to prefer, and Esau to put back

ISAAC I may not do it, wife, I pray you be content

The title of birthright, that cometh by descent,  
Or the place of eldership coming by due course,  
I may not change nor shift for better nor for worse  
Nature's law it is, the eldest son to knowledge,  
And in no wise to bar him of his heritage  
And ye shall of Esau one day have comfort

REBECCA Set a good long day then, or else we shall come short

ISAAC I warrant you, he will do well enough at length.

REBECCA. You must needs commend him, being your might and strength

ISAAC Well, now go we hence, little Mido,  
where art thou?

MIDO I have stood here all this while, list'ning,  
how you

And my dame Rebecca have been laying the law,  
But she hath as quick answers as ever I saw  
Ye could not speak anything unto her so thick,  
But she had her answer as ready and as quick

ISAAC Yea, women's answers are but few times  
to seek

MIDO But I did not see Esau neither all this  
same week

Nor do I love your son Esau so well,  
As I do love your son Jacob by a great deal

ISAAC No, dost thou, Mido? and tell me the  
cause why

MIDO Why? for I do not And none other  
cause know I

But everybody, as well one as other,  
Do wish that Jacob had been the elder brother

ISAAC Well, come on, let us go

MIDO And who shall lead you? I?

REBECCA No, it is my office as long as I am by  
And I would all wives, as the world this day is,  
Would unto their husbands likewise do their office

MIDO Why, dame Rebecca, then all wedded  
men should be blind

REBECCA What, thou foolish lad, no such thing  
was in my mind

## ACTUS SECUNDI, SCÆNA PRIMA.

RAGAN, *the servant of Esau*

RAGAN I have heard it oft, but now I feel a  
wonder,

In what grievous pain they die, that die for hunger



O my greedy stomach, how it doth bite and gnaw?  
 If I were at a rack, I could eat hay or straw  
 Mine empty guts do flet, my maw doth even tear,  
 Would God I had a piece of some horsebread here  
 Yet is master Esau in worse case than I  
 If he have not some meat, the sooner he will die  
 He hath sunk for faintness twice or thrice by the  
 way,

And not one seely bit we got since yesterday  
 All that ever he hath, he would have given to-day  
 To have had but three morsels his hunger to allay  
 Or in the field to have met with some hogs,  
 I could scarcely keep him from eating of these dogs  
 He hath sent me afore some meat for to provide,  
 And cometh creeping after, scarce able to stride  
 But if I know where to get of any man,  
 For to ease mine own self, as hungry as I am,  
 I pray God I stink, but if any come to me,  
 Die who die will, for sure I will first served be  
 I will see, if any be ready here at home,  
 Or whether Jacob have any, that peakish mome  
 But first I must put all my dogs up,  
 And lay up this gear, and then God send us the  
 cup

## ACTUS SECUNDI, SCÆNA SECUNDA

ESAU, *the master*      RAGAN, *the servant*

[*Esau cometh in so farrnt, that he can scarce go*

ESAU O, what a grievous pain is hunger to a  
 man?

Take all that I have for meat, help who that can  
 O Lord, some good body, for God's sake, give me  
 meat

I force not what it were, so that I had to eat

Meat or drink, save my life—or bread, I reck not  
what

If there be nothing else, some man give me a cat  
If any good body on me will do so much cost,  
I will tear and eat her raw, she shall ne'er be rost  
I promise of honesty I will eat her raw  
And what a noddy was I, and a whoreson daw,  
To let Ragan go with all my dogs at once  
A shoulder of a dog were now meat for the nonce  
O, what shall I do? my teeth I can scarcely charm  
From gnawing away the brawn of my very arm  
I can no longer stand for faint, I must needs lie  
And except meat come soon, remediless I die  
And where art thou, Ragan, whom I sent before?  
Unless thou come at once, I never see thee more  
Where art thou, Ragan, I hear not of thee yet?

RAGAN Here, as fast as I can, but no meat can  
I get  
Not one draught of drink, not one poor morsel of  
bread

Not one bit or crumb, though I should straight-  
way be dead

Therefore ye may now see, how much ye are to  
blame,

That will thus starve yourself for following your  
game

ESAU Ah, thou villain, tellest thou me this now?  
If [I] had thee, I would eat thee, to God I vow  
Ah, meat, thou whoreson, why hast thou not  
brought me meat?

RAGAN Would you have me bring you that, I  
can nowhere get?

ESAU Come hither, let me tell thee a word in  
thine ear.

RAGAN Nay, speak out aloud I will not come  
a foot near

Fall ye to snatching at folks? adieu, I am gone

ESAU Nay, for God's love, Ragan, leave me not  
alone  
I will not eat thee, Ragan, so God me help  
RAGAN No, I shall desire you to choose some  
other whelp  
Being in your best lust, I would topple with ye,  
And pluck a good crow, ere ye brake your fast  
with me  
What? are you mankin<sup>1</sup> now? I reckon it best, I,  
To bind your hands behind you, even as ye lie  
ESAU Nay, have mercy on me, and let me not  
perish  
RAGAN In faith, nought could I get, wherewith  
you to cherish  
ESAU Was there nothing to be had among so  
many?  
RAGAN I could not find one but Jacob that had  
any,  
And no grant would he make for ought that I  
could say,  
Yet no man alive with fairer words could him pray  
But the best red pottage he hath, that ever was  
ESAU Go, pray him, I may speak with him once,  
ere I pass  
RAGAN That message, by God's grace, shall not  
long be undone  
ESAU Hie thee, go apace, and return again soon  
If Jacob have due brotherly compassion,  
He will not see me faint after this fashion,  
But I daresay, the wretch had rather see me throst,  
Than he would find in his heart to do so much cost  
For where is, between one fremman<sup>2</sup> and another,  
Less love found than now between brother and  
brother?

---

<sup>1</sup> *ze*, Mankind, masculine, furious

<sup>2</sup> Stranger A more usual form is *fremed*

Will Jacob come forth to shew comfort unto me ?  
The whoreson hypocrite will as soon hanged be  
Yet, peace, methinketh Jacob is coming indeed  
And my mind giveth me at his hand I shall speed,  
For he is as gentle and loving as can be,  
As full of compassion and pity  
But let me see, doth he come ? no, I warrant you  
He come, quod I ? tush, he come ? then hang  
Esau !

For there is not this day in all the world round  
Such another hodypeak wretch to be found,  
And Ragan my man, is not that a fine knave ?  
Have any mo masters such a man as I have ?  
So idle, so loit'ring, so trifling, so toying ?  
So prattling, so trattling, so chiding, so boying ?  
So jesting, so wresting, so mocking, so mowing ?  
So nipping, so tripping, so cocking, so crowing ?  
So knappish, so snappish, so elvish, so froward ?  
So crabbed, so wrabbed, so stiff, so untoward ?  
In play or in pastime so jocund, so merry ?  
In work or in labour so dead or so weary ?  
O, that I had his ear between my teeth now,  
I should shake him, even as a dog that lulleth a  
sow

But in faith, if ever I recover myself,  
There was never none trounced, as I shall tounce  
that elf

He and Jacob are agreed, I daresay, I,  
Not to come at all, but to suffer me here to die  
Which if they do, they shall find this same word  
true

That, after I am dead, my soul shall them pursue  
I will be avenged on all foes, till I die  
Yea, and take vengeance, when I am dead too, I  
For, I mistrust, against me agreed they have  
For thone is but a fool, and thother a stark knave

*Enter RAGAN and JACOB behind, conversing*

RAGAN I assure you, Jacob, the man is very weak

ESAU But hark once again, methink I hear them speak !

RAGAN I promise you, I fear his life be already pass'd

JACOB May God forbid !

ESAU Lo, now they come at last

RAGAN If ye believe not me, see yourself, where he is

JACOB Fie, brother Esau, what a folly is this ?  
About vain pastime to wander abroad and peak,  
Till with hunger you make yourself thus faint and weak

ESAU Brother Jacob, I pray you chide now no longer,  
But give me somewhat, wherewith to slake mine hunger

JACOB Alack, brother, I have in my little cottage  
Nothing but a mess of gross and homely pottage

ESAU Refresh me therewithall, and boldly ask of me  
The best thing that I have, whatsoever it be  
I were a very beast, when thou my life dost save  
If I should stick with thee for the best thing I have

JACOB Can ye be content to sell your birthright to me ?

ESAU Hold, here is my hand, I do sell it here to thee  
With all the profits thereof henceforth to be thine,  
As free, as full, as large, as ever it was mine  
JACOB Then swear thou hand in hand before the living Lord

This bargain to fulfil, and to stand by thy word  
ESAU Before the Lord I sweal, to whom each  
heart is known,  
That my birthright that was from henceforth is  
thine own

JACOB Thou shalt also with me by this promise  
indent,  
With this bargain and sale to hold thyself content  
ESAU If each penny thereof might be worth  
twenty pound,

I willingly to thee surrender it this stound  
And if each cicle might be worth a whole talent,  
I promise with this sale to hold me content

JACOB Come, let us set him on foot, that he  
may go sup

RAGAN Nay, first I will know a thung, ere I  
help him up,  
Sirrah, will ye eat folk, when ye are long fasting ?

ESAU No, I pray thee help me up, and leave thy  
jesting

RAGAN No, trow, eat your brother Jacob now,  
if you lust,  
For you shall not eat me, I tell you, that is just

JACOB Come, that with my pottage thou may'st  
refreshed be

ESAU There is no meat on earth, that so well  
liketh me

RAGAN Yet I may tell you, it is pottage dearly  
bought

ESAU No, not a whit, for my bargain take thou  
no thought

I defy that birthright that should be of more price  
Than helping of one's self I am not so unwise

RAGAN And how then, sir, shall poor Ragan  
have no meat ?

ESAU Yes, and if thou canst my brother Jacob  
intreat

JACOB God grant I have enough for Esau alone

RAGAN Why then I perceive poor Ragan shall  
have none

[*Esau, entering into Jacob's tent, shaketh  
Ragan off*]

Well, much good do it you with your pottage of  
rice

I would fast and fare ill, ere I ate of that price  
Would I sell my birthright, being an eldest son ?  
Forsooth then were it a fair thread that I had  
spun

And then to let it go for a mess of pottage !  
What is that but both unthriftiness and dotage ?  
Alack, alack, good blessed father Isaac,  
That ever son of thine should play such a lewd  
knack !

And yet I do not think but God this thing hath  
wrought,

For Jacob is as good, as Esau is nought  
But forth cometh Mido, as fast as he can trot  
For a cicle, whether to call me in or not ?

## ACTUS SECUNDI, SCÆNA TERTIA

MIDO, *the boy* RAGAN

[*Mido cometh in clapping his hands and  
laughing*]

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha,  
Now who saw e'er such another as Esau ?  
By my truth, I will not lie to thee, Ragan,  
Since I was born, I never see any man  
So greedily eat rice out of a pot or pan  
He would not have a dish, but take the pot and  
sup

Ye never saw hungry dog so stab<sup>1</sup> potage up

RAGAN Why, how did he sup it? I pray thee,  
tell me, how?

MIDO Marry, even thus, as thou shalt see me  
do now

[*Here he counterfeiteth supping out of the pot*

O, I thank you, Jacob with all my heart, Jacob  
Gently done, Jacob a friendly part, Jacob!

I can sup so, Jacob!

Yea, then will I sup too, Jacob

Here is good meat, Jacob!

RAGAN As ere was eat, Jacob!

MIDO As e'er I saw, Jacob!

RAGAN Esau a daw, Jacob!

MIDO Sweet rice pottage, Jacob!

RAGAN By Esau's dotage, Jacob

MIDO Jolly good cheer, Jacob!

RAGAN But bought full dear, Jacob!

MIDO I was hungry, Jacob

RAGAN I was an unthrift, Jacob

MIDO Ye will none now, Jacob

RAGAN I cannot for you, Jacob

MIDO I will eat all, Jacob

RAGAN The devil go with all, Jacob

MIDO Thou art a good son, Jacob

RAGAN And would he never have done, Jacob?

MIDO No, but still coggl'd<sup>2</sup> in, like Jackdaw  
that cries *ka lob*!

That to be kill'd I could not laughing forbear

And therefore I came out, I durst not abide there

RAGAN Is there any pottage left for me, that  
thou wot?

<sup>1</sup> The meaning seems to be obvious enough, but the word is not to be found in our glossaries

<sup>2</sup> Halliwell mentions this word, but none of his interpretations suits the present context



MIDO No, I left Esau about to lick the pot

RAGAN Lick, quod thou? now a shame take  
him that can all lick

MIDO The pot shall need no washing, he will it  
so lick,

And by this he is sitting down to bread and drink

RAGAN And shall I have no part with him, dost  
thou think?

MIDO No, for he pray'd Jacob, ere he did begin,  
To shut the tent fast, that no mo guests come in

RAGAN And made he no mention of me his  
servant?

MIDO He said thou were a knave, and bad thee  
hence avaunt

Go shift, where thou couldest, thou gottest nothing  
there

RAGAN God yield you, Esau, with all my  
stomach cheer<sup>1</sup>

MIDO I must in again, lest perhaps I be shent,  
For I asked noboby licence, when I went [*Exeat*

RAGAN Nay, it is his nature, do what ye can for  
him,

No thank at his hand, but choose you, sink or  
swim

Then reason it with him in a meet time and place,  
And he shall be ready to flee straight in your face  
This proverb in Esau may be understand

Claw a churl by the tail, and he will file<sup>2</sup> your hand  
Well i-wis, Esau, ye did know well enou',

That I had as much need to be meated as you  
Have I trotted and trudged all night and all day,  
And now leave me without door, and so go your  
way?

Have I spent so much labour for you to provide,  
And you nothing regard what of me may betide?

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *stomaches*

<sup>2</sup> Defile

Have I run with you while I was able to go,  
And now you purchase food for yourself and no  
mo?

Have I taken so long pain you truly to seive,  
And can ye be content, that I famish and starve?  
I must lacquey and come lugging greyhound and  
hound,

And carry the weight, I dare say, of twenty pound,  
And to help his hunger purchase grace and favour,  
And now to be shut out fasting for my labour!

By my faith, I may say I serve a good master,  
Nay, nay, I serve an ill husband and a waster  
That neither profit regardeth nor honesty,  
What marvel I then, if he pass so light on me?

But, Esau, now that ye have sold your birthright,  
I commend me to you, and God give you good  
night

And let a friend tell him his fault at any time,  
Ye shall hear him chafe beyond all reason or  
rhyme

Except it were a friend or a very hell hound,  
Ye never saw the match of him in any ground  
When I shew him of good-will, what others do say,  
He will fall out with me, and offer me a fray  
And what can there be a worser condition,  
Than to do ill, and refuse admonition?

Can such a one prosper, or come to a good end?  
Then I care not how many children God me send  
Once Esau shall not beguile me, I can tell  
Except he shall fortune to amend, or do well  
Therefore why do I about him waste thus much  
talk,

Whom no man can induce ordnately to walk?  
But some man perchance doth not a little wonder,  
How I, who but right now did roar out for hunger,  
Have now so much vacant and void time of leisure,  
To walk and to talk, and discourse all of pleasure

I told you at the first, I would provide for one  
 My mother taught me that lesson a good while  
 agone

When I came to Jacob, his friendship to require,  
 I drew near and near till I came to the fire  
 There hard beside me stood the pottage-pot,  
 Even as God would have it, neither cold nor hot,  
 Good simple Jacob could not turn his back so thick  
 But I at the ladle got a gulp or a lick,  
 So that, ere I went, I made a very good meal,  
 And din'd better cheap than Esau a good deal.  
 But here cometh now master Esau forth

## ACTUS SECUNDI, SCÆNA QUARTA

ESAU *and* RAGAN

Ah, sir, when one is hungry, good meat is much  
 worth

And well fare a good brother yet in time of need,  
 [*Esau cometh forth, wiping his mouth*]

The world is now meetly well amended indeed,

ESAU By my truth, if I had bidden<sup>1</sup> from meat  
 any longer,

I think my very maw would have fret asunder  
 Then had I been dead and gone, I make God a  
 vow

RAGAN Surely then the world had had a great  
 loss of you,  
 For where should we have had your fellow in your  
 place? [*Aside*]

ESAU What should I have done with my birth-  
 right in this case?

RAGAN Kept it still, and you had not been a  
 very ass [*Aside*]

ESAU But the best pottage it was yet, that ever was

It were sin not to sell one's soul for such gear

RAGAN Ye have done no less in my conscience,  
I fear [*Aside*

ESAU Who is this that standeth clattering at my back?

RAGAN A poor man of yours, sir, that doth his dinner lack

ESAU Dinner, whoreson knave? dinner at this time a' day?

Nothing with thee but dinner and munching alway

Why, thy whoreson villain slave, who is hungry now?

RAGAN Indeed, sir (as seemeth by your words) not you

ESAU A man were better fill the bellies of some twelfe,

Than to fill the gut of one such whoreson elf,

That doth none other good but eat, and drink, and sleep

RAGAN He shall do something else, whom ye shall have to keep [*Aside*

ESAU And that maketh thee so slothful and so lithier,

I dare say he was six hours coming hither,

When I sent him to make provision afore,

Not passing a mile hence or very little more

And yet being so far pass'd the hour of dining,

See, and the knave be not for his dinner whining'

Fast a while, fast with a mischief, greedy slave,

Must I provide meat for every glutton knave?

RAGAN I may fast, for any meat that of you I have [*Aside*

ESAU Or deserve thy dinner, before thou do't crave

RAGAN If I have not deserved it at this season,

I shall never deserve it in mine own reason

Ye promised I should eat, till I cried ho

ESAU Yea, that was, if we took either hare,  
teg, or doe

RAGAN But when yourself were hungry, ye said,  
I wot what ——

ESAU What, thou villain slave, tellest thou me  
now of that ?

RAGAN Then, help, run apace, Ragan, my good  
servant

ESAU Yea then was then, now is it otherwise  
avaunt !

Have I nothing to do but provide meat for you ?

RAGAN Ye might have given me some part,  
when ye had enough

ESAU What, of the red rice pottage with Jacob  
I had ?

Why, the crow would not give it her bird—thou  
art mad,

Is that meat for you ? nay, it would make you too  
rank

Nay, soft, brother mine, I must keep you more  
lank

It hath made me ever<sup>1</sup> since so lusty and<sup>2</sup> fresh,

As though I had eaten all delicates of flesh

I feel no manner faintness whereof to complain

RAGAN Yet to-morrow ye must be as hungry  
again,

Then must ye and will ye wish again for good  
cheer

And repent you, that ever ye bought this so  
dear

ESAU Repent me ? wherefore ? then the Lord  
give me sorrow,

If it were to do, I would do it to-morrow

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *even*

<sup>2</sup> Old copy, *as*

Foi, thou foolish knave, what hath Jacob of me bought?

RAGAN But a matter of a straw and a thing of nought!

ESAU My birthright and whole title of mine eldership,

Maury, sir, I pray God much good do it his maship,

If I die to-morrow, what good would it do me?

If he die to-morrow, what benefit hath he?

And foi a thing hanging on such casualty,

Better a mess of pottage than nothing, pardy!

If my father live long, when should I it enjoy?

If my father die soon, then it is but a toy

For if the time were come, thinkest thou that Jacob

Should find Esau such a lout or such a lob

To suffer him to enjoy my birthright in rest?

Nay, I will first toss him and trounce him of the best,

I think to find it a matter of conscience,

And Jacob first to have a fart, su reverence

When my father Isaac shall the matter know,

He will not let Jacob have my birthright, I trow

Or if he should keep it as his own, I pray you,

Might not I live without it, and do well enou'?

Do none but men's eldest sons prosper well?

How live younger brethren then, I beseech you, tell?

Once, if anything be by the sword to be got,

This falchion and I will have part to our lot.

But now come on, go we abroad awhile and walk,

Let my birthright go, and of other matters talk

RAGAN Who—I, walk? nay, I trow not, till I have better din'd

It is more time to seek, where I may some meat find

ESAU What say'st thou, drawlatch ? come forth,  
with a mischief !  
Wilt thou not go with me ? on, forward, whoreson  
thief ?  
Shall it be as pleaseth you, or as pleaseth me ?  
RAGAN Nay, as pleaseth you, sir, methink it  
must be  
ESAU And where be my dogs and my hound ?  
be they all well ?  
RAGAN Better than your man, for they be in  
their kennel  
ESAU Then go see all be well in my part of the  
tent  
RAGAN With a right good will, sir, I go incontinent  
ESAU And I will to my field, the which I  
cleansed last,  
To see what hope there is, that it will yield fruit  
fast

## ACTUS SECUNDI, SCÆNA QUARTA

JACOB MIDO REBECCA ABRA, *the handmaid*

JACOB Thou knowest, little Mido, where my  
mother is  
MIDO I can go to her as straight as a thread,  
and not miss  
JACOB Go call her, and come again with her  
thine own self  
MIDO Yes, ye shall see me scud like a little elf  
JACOB Where I have, by the enticement of my  
mother,  
Bargained and bought the birthright of my brother  
Turn it all to good, O Lord, if it be thy will  
Thou knowest my heart, Lord, I did it for no ill  
And whatever shall please thee to work or to do,

Thou shalt find me prest and obedient thereto  
But here is my mother Rebecca now in place

MIDO How say you, master Jacob, ran not I  
apace ?

JACOB Yes, and a good son to go quicke on your  
errand

REBECCA Son, how goeth the matter ? let me  
understand

JACOB Forsooth, mother, I did so, as ye me  
bad,

Esau to sell me all his birthright persuade

REBECCA Hast thou bought it indeed, and he  
therewith content ?

JACOB Yea, and have his promise, that he will  
never repent

REBECCA Is the bargaine through ? hast thou  
paid him his price ?

JACOB Yea, that I have, a mess of red pottage  
of rice,

And he ate it up every whit, well I wot

MIDO When he had supp'd up all I saw him  
lick the pot,

Thus he licked, and thus he licked, and thus way  
I thought to have lick'd the pot myself once to-day,  
But Esau beguil'd me, I shrew him for that,  
And left not so much as a lick for puss our cat

REBECCA Son Jacob, forasmuch as thou hast so  
well sped,

With an hymn or psalm let the Lord be praised  
Sing we all together, and give thanks to the Lord,  
Whose promise and performance do so well accord

MIDO Shall we sing the same hymn, that all  
our house doth sing ?

For Abraham and his seed to give God praising

REBECCA Yea, the very same

MIDO Then must we all kneel down thus,  
And Abra, our maid, here must also sing with us,



Kneel down, Abra , what, I say, will ye not kneel  
down ?

Kneel, when I bid you, the slackest wench in this  
town !

*[Here they kneel down to sing all four, saying that  
Abra is slackest and Mido is quickest]*

### THE FIRST SONG

*Blessed be thou, O the God of Abraham,  
For thou art the Lord our God, and none but thou  
What thou workest to the glory of thy name,  
Passeth man's reason to search what way or how  
Thy promise it was Abraham should have seed  
More than the stars of the sky to be told,  
He believed, and had Isaac indeed,  
When both he and Sara seemed very old  
Isaac many years longed for a son,  
Rebecca, thy handmaid, long time was barren,  
By prayer in thy sight such favour he won,  
That at one birth she brought him forth sons  
twain,  
Wherefore, O Lord, we do confess and believe,  
That both thou canst and wilt thy promise fulfil  
But how it shall come, we can no reason give,  
Save all to be wrought according to thy will.  
Blessed be thou, O God of Abraham, &c*

REBECCA Now, doubt not, Jacob, but God hath  
appointed thee  
As the eldest son unto Isaac to be  
And now have no doubt, but thou art sure elected,  
And that unthrift Esau of God is rejected  
And to sell thee his birthright since he was so  
mad,  
I warrant thee the blessing that he should have had

JACOB Yea? how may that be wrought?

REBECCA Yes, yes, let me alone

Our<sup>1</sup> good old Isaac is blind, and cannot see,  
So that by policy he may beguiled be,  
I shall devise how for no ill intent ne thought,  
But to bring to pass that I know God will have  
wrought,

And I charge you twain, Abra and little Mido

MIDO Nay, ye should have set Mido before  
Abia, I trow,

For I am a man toward, and so is not she

ABRA No, but yet I am more woman toward  
than ye

REBECCA I charge you both that, whatever hath  
been spoken,

Ye do not to any living body open

ABRA For my part it shall to no body uttered be

MIDO And slit my tongue, if ever it come out  
for me

But if any tell, Abia here will be prattling

For they say, women will ever be clattering

ABRA There is none here that prattleth so much  
as you

REBECCA No mo words, but hence we altogether  
now

[*Ereunt omnes*]

## ACTUS TERTIJ, SCÆNA PRIMA

ESAU ISAAC MIDO

ESAU Now, since I last saw mine old father  
Isaac,

Both I do think it long, and he will judge me slack,  
But he cometh forth, I will here listen and see,

Whether he shall chance to speak any word of me  
[*Steps aside*]

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *once*

ISAAC On, lead me forth, Mido, to the bench  
on this hand,  
That I may sit me down, for I cannot long stand  
MIDO Here, sir, this same way, and ye be at  
the bench now,  
Where ye may sit down in God's name, if please  
you  
ISAAC I marvel, where Esau my son doth be-  
come,  
That he doth now of days visit me so seldom  
But it is oft seen, whom fathers do best favour,  
Of them they have least love again for their labour  
I think, since I saw him, it is a whole week  
In faith, little Mido, I would thou wouldest him  
seek  
MIDO Forsooth, Master Isaac, and I knew it  
where,  
It should not be very long ere I would be there  
But shall I at adventure go seek where he is?  
ESAU Seek no farther, Mido already here he is  
ISAAC Methunketh, I have Esau his voice per-  
ceived  
ESAU Ye guess truly, father, ye are not deceived  
MIDO Here he is come now invisible, by my  
soul  
For I saw him not, till he spake hard at my poll !  
ISAAC Now, go thou in, Mido, let us two here  
alone  
MIDO Sir, if ye command me, full quickly I am  
gone  
ISAAC Yet, and if I call thee, see thou be not  
slack  
MIDO I come at the first call, good Master  
Isaac  
ISAAC Son Esau  
ESAU Here, father  
ISAAC Is none here but we ?

ESAU None to harken our talk, father, that I  
do see

[*Rebecca entereth behind unseen, and listens*

ISAAC Son Esau, why hast thou been from me  
so long?

ESAU I cly you mercy, father, if I have done  
wiong

But I am loth to trouble you, having nothing  
To present you withal, nor venison to bring

ISAAC Son Esau, thou knowest that I do thee  
love

ESAU I thank you for it, father, as doth me  
behave

ISAAC And now thou seest my days draw towards  
an end

ESAU That is to me great ruth, if I could it  
amend

ISAAC I must go the way of all mortal flesh,  
Therefore, while my memory and wit is yet fiesh,  
I would thee endow mine heritage to succeed  
And bless thee, as I ought, to multiply my seed  
The God of my father Abraham and of me  
Hath promised, that our seed as the sand shall be  
He is a God of truth, and in his words just  
Therefore in my working shall be no fault, I trust  
Now, therefore, son Esau, get thee forth to hunt,  
With thy bow and quiver, as erst thou hast been  
wont,

[And] bring me of thy venison that is good

ESAU Ye shall have of the best that runneth in  
the wood

ISAAC When thou comest home, to dress it it  
shall behave,

And to make for mine own tooth such meat as I  
love

Thus do, mine own dear son, and then I shall thee  
kiss

With the kiss of peace, and thee for ever bless  
 ESAU Your will t' accomplish, most dear father  
 Isaac,  
 With all good haste and speed I shall not be found  
 slack  
 ISAAC Then help lead me home, in my tent that  
 I were set,  
 And then go, when thou wilt  
 ESAU I shall withouten let

### ACTUS TERTIJ, SCÆNA SECUNDA

#### REBECCA

REBECCA This talk of Isaac in secret have I  
 heard,  
 And what end it should come to, my heart is afeard,  
 Ne'er had I so much ado to forbear to speak  
 But the Lord, I trust, will Isaac's purpose break  
*[Here she kneeleth down, and prayeth]*  
 O God of Abraham, make it of none effect  
 Let Jacob have the blessing, whom thou hast elect  
 I for my part shall work what may be wrought,  
 That it may to Jacob from Esau be brought,  
 And in will I go to see what I can devise,  
 That Isaac's intent may fail in any wise

### ACTUS TERTIJ, SCÆNA TERTIA

#### RAGAN ESAU

RAGAN Nay, we must on hunting go yet once  
 more again,  
*[Here he cometh forth with his hunting staff  
 and other things, and a bag of victuals]*  
 And never come home now, except we speed certain,  
 But I trow for hunger I have provided here

That whatever befall, I, Ragan, shall have cheer  
 I have no time to tell what delicacies here be,  
 But (think this to be true) they're fit for better  
                   men than me

And what? shall Esau hereof have any part?  
 Nay, I trust to convey it by such pretty art  
 That, till the bag be clear, he shall it never see  
 I shall, and if he faint, feed him as he fed me  
 I shall requite his shutting me out of the door  
 That, if he bid me run to get him meat afore,  
 I shall run as fast as my feet were made of lead,  
 And tell him there is none, though I may well be  
                   sped

I will be even with him for my fare last day,  
 When he was with Jacob

*[Esau enters suddenly behind him]*

ESAU                               What is it that thou dost say?

RAGAN   Sir, on your behalf I earnestly wish and  
                   pray

That, if like need chance, ye may fare as last day,  
 When ye were with Jacob

ESAU                               Well, come on, let us go

RAGAN   Even when ye will, is there let in me  
                   or no?

*[Exeunt ambo]*

## ACTUS QUARTI, SCÆNA PRIMA

REBECCA   JACOB

REBECCA   Son Jacob, even now is come the very  
                   hour

That, if thou have any grace, or heart, or power,  
 To play thy part well, and stick unto it through-  
                   out,

Esau his blessing will be thine without doubt

JACOB   Mother, I know your good-will to be  
                   unfeigned,

But I see not which way the thing may be attained

REBECCA I have it contrived, how all things  
shall be done,

Do thou as I shall bid thee, and it will be won

JACOB Mother, in me shall be no fault or negligence

REBECCA Then harken very well unto this my sentence

I heard old Isaac, in a long, solemn talk,

Bid thy brother Esau to the field to walk,

And there with his bow to kill him some venison,

Which brought and dressed, he is to have his benison

For I am aged (said Isaac truly),

And would bless thee, dear son, before that I die

Now is Esau gone to do it even so,

But while he is away, I would have thee to go

Abroad unto the flock, and fetch me kids twain,

Of which I shall with a trice make such meat  
certain,

As shall say, *Come, eat me*, and shall make old Isaac

Lick his lips thereat, so toothsome shall it smack

I shall make him thereof such as he doth love,

Which in thy brother's stead to bless thee shall him  
move

JACOB O sweet and dear mother, this device is  
but vain,

For Esau is rough, and I am smooth certain

And so, when I shall to my father bring this meat,

Perchance he will feel me, before that he will eat

Old men be mistrustful he shall the matter take,

That I went about my father a fool to make

Mother, by such a prank the matter will be worse

And I instead of blessing shall purchase me his  
curse

REBECCA On me be thy curse, my son, let it  
light on me

Only fetch thou the kids hither, as I bid thee,

Do thou thy true devoir, and let God work therein  
JACOB Upon your word, mother, I will the  
thing begin,  
Send me little Mido to help me bear a kid  
REBECCA He shall come by and by, for so I  
shall him bid  
Now, Lord, and if thou please that this thing  
shall take place,  
Further this our enterprise, helping with thy grace  
[Exit

## ACTUS QUARTI, SCÆNA SECUNDA

JACOB and MIDO

MIDO Are ye here, master Jacob? I came you  
to look,  
And here dame Rebecca hath sent you your sheep-  
crook,  
And hath commanded me to wait on you this day  
But wherefore or why, she would nothing to me  
say  
JACOB Come on then, follow me, Mido, a little  
ways  
MIDO Whither ye shall lead me, I am at all  
assays  
JACOB And art thou able to bear a kid on thy  
back?  
MIDO I am able, I trow, to bear a quarter-sack  
How say you to this corpse? is it not fat and round?  
How say ye to these legs? come they not to the  
ground?  
And be not here arms able you matter to speed?  
Be not here likely shoulders to do such a deed?  
Therefore come, master Jacob, if this your doubt  
be  
For bringing home of kids, lay the biggest on me,



So that if we make a feast, I may have some part  
JACOB Yes, that shalt thou, Mido, right  
worthy thou art

## ACTUS QUARTI, SCÆNA TERTIA

REBECCA ABRA

REBECCA I come to see, if Jacob be gone a-field  
yet,  
A little slacking may all our purpose let  
But now that he is gone, he will be here at once,  
Therefore I will call my maid Abra for the nonce  
That all thing within may be in a readiness  
Abra, where be ye, Abra?

ABRA Here within, mistress

REBECCA Come forth when, Abra? what,  
Abra, I say!

ABRA Anon

REBECCA Must I call so oft? why come ye not  
by and by?

ABRA I was washing my vessel forsooth, mis-  
tress, I

REBECCA And in very deed, look that all your  
vessels be clean

ABRA There is not one foul piece in all our  
tent, I ween

REBECCA Then make a great fire, and make  
ready your pot,

And see there be plenty of water, cold and hot,  
And see the spit be scoured as clean as any pearl

ABRA If this be not quickly done, call me  
naughty girl.

REBECCA. Nay, soft, whither away? I have not  
yet all done

ABRA I thought ye would have had me as quick  
to be gone,

As when ye call Abra, ye would have me to come  
REBECCA Then see ye have made ready cloves,  
mace, and cinnamon  
Pepper and saffron, then fet herbs for the pot,  
ABRA We will have the best that by me can be  
got  
REBECCA And let no foul corner be about all  
the tent  
ABRA If ye find any fault, hardly let me be  
shent  
Is there anything else but that I may go now?  
REBECCA Nought but that, when I come, I find  
no fault in you.  
ABRA No, I warrant you, I will not let my  
matters sleep  
REBECCA Any good wench will at her dame's  
bidding take keep  
Now, God of Abraham, as I trust in thy grace,  
Send Jacob the blessing in Esau his place  
As thou hast ordained, right so must all thing be  
Perform thine own words, Lord, which thou  
spakest to me  
Now will I go in to see, that mine old husband  
May of my secret working nothing understand  
Or in case he smell what we have thus far begun,  
He may think it all for Esau to be done

## ACTUS QUARTI, SCÆNA QUARTA

ABRA, *the maid*      DEBORAH, *the nurse*

ABRA He, that were now within, should find  
all thing, I ween,  
As trim as a trencher, as trick, as sweet, as clean  
And seeing that my dame prepareth such a feast,  
I will not, I trow, be found such a sluttish beast,

That there shall any filth about our tent be kept,  
But that both within and without it shall be  
swept

[*Then let her sweep with a broom, and while  
she doth it, sing this song, and when she  
hath sung, let her say thus* <sup>1</sup>

#### THE SECOND SONG

*It hath been a proverb, before I was born,  
Young doth it prick, that will be a thorn  
Who will be evil, or who will be good,  
Who given to truth, or who to falsehood  
Each body's youth showeth a great likelihood  
For young doth it prick, that will be a thorn*

*Who so in youth will no goodness embrace,  
But follow pleasure, and not virtue's trace,  
Great marvel it is, if such come to grace  
For young doth it prick, that will be a thorn*

*Such as in youth will refuse to be taught,  
Or will be slack to work, as he ought,  
When they come to age, their proof will be nought  
For young doth it prick, that will be a thorn*

*If a child have been given to any vice,  
Except he be guided by such as be wise,  
He will thereof all his life have a spice  
For young doth it prick, that will be a thorn*

*It hath been a proverb, &c*

ABRA Now have I done, and, as it should be  
for the nonce,  
My sweeping and my song are ended both at once  
Now but for fetting mine herbs I might go play  
Deborah, nurse Deborah, a word, I you pray

---

<sup>1</sup> Referring to the speech below In the old copy this direction is printed in the margin, and such is, no doubt, its most suitable position

*Enter DEBORAH*

DEBORAH What is the matter? who calleth me Deborah?

ABRA Forsooth, gentle nurse, even I, little Abra, I pray you, sweet Deborah, take in this same broom, And look well to all thing, till I return home I must to the garden as fast as I can trot, As I was commanded, to fet herbs for the pot But, in the meantime, I pray you, nurse, look about, And see well to the fire, that it go not out, I will amble so fast, that I will soon be there, And here again, I trow, ere an horse lick his ear

[*Exit*]

DEBORAH There is not a prettier gul within this mile, Than this Abia will be within this little while As true as any steel, ye may trust her with gold Though it were a bushel, and not a penny told As quick about her work, that must be quick<sup>1</sup> sped As any wench in twenty mile about her tread As fine a piece it is, as I know but a few, Yet perchance her husband of her may have a shrew Cat after kind (say'th the proverb) sweet milk will lap, If the mother be a shrew, the daughter cannot 'scape One sure<sup>1</sup> mark she hath I marvel, if she slip For her nose is growing above her over lip But it is time, that I into the tent be gone, Lest she come and chide me, she will come now anon

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *once our* Perhaps we ought to read *sour*

## ACTUS QUARTI, SCÆNA QUINTA

ABRA

ABRA How say ye? have not I despatched me quickly?  
A straw for that wench that doth not somewhat likely,  
I have brought here good herbs, and of them plenty,  
To make both broth and farcing,<sup>1</sup> and that full dainty,  
I trust to make such broth that, when all things are in,  
God Almighty self may wet his finger therein  
Here is thyme and parsley, spinach and rosemary  
Endive, succory, lacture, violet, clary,  
Liverwort, marigold, sorrel, hart's-tongue, and sage  
Pennyroyal, purslane, bugloss, and boràge,  
With many very good herbs, mo than I do name  
But to tarry here thus long, I am much to blame  
For if Jacob should come, I not in readiness,  
I must of covenant be shent of our mistress  
And I would not for twenty pound, I tell ye,  
That any point of default should be found in me  
[Exit

## ACTUS QUARTI, SCÆNA SEXTA

REBECCA MIDO JACOB

REBECCA I come to see, if Jacob do not return yet,  
I cannot marvel enough what should be his let,  
And greatly wonder he is away thus long

---

<sup>1</sup> Stuffing or forcing, the same kind of thing as we now know under the name of *forced* meat

I fear much of his absence, lest something be wrong  
As well as heart can wish, all thing is ready here,  
And now to me each moment seemeth a whole year  
But hark, methinketh I hear a young kid blea !

It is so indeed, I see Jacob, well is me !

MIDO Hark, master Jacob, heard ye ever kid  
blea so ?

I ween she knoweth aforehand, whereto she shall go

JACOB I would not my father Isaac should hear

MIDO Nay, she will scarcely be still when she is  
dead, I do fear

JACOB But lo, I see my mother stand before the  
tent

*Enter JACOB and MIDO*

REBECCA O Loid, methinketh long, son Jacob,  
since thou went

JACOB And methinketh, mother, we have hied  
us well

MIDO I have made many feet to follow, I can  
tell

REBECCA Give me thy kid, my son, and now let  
me alone,

Bring thou in thine, Mido, and see thou be a stone

MIDO A stone ? how should that be, mistress ?

I am a lad,

And a boy alive, as good as e'er ye had

And now, in bringing home this kid, I have, I trow,

Tried myself a man and a pretty fellow

REBECCA I meant thou shouldest nothing say

MIDO One warning is enough, ye bad us so  
last day

REBECCA Well, let me go in, and venison hereof  
make

JACOB And hearest thou, Mido ? see that good  
heed thou take

In any wise to come in my father's sight

MIDO Why, he seeth no better at noon than at  
midnight

Is he not blind long since, and doth his eyes lack ?

Therefore go in, dame, I bear an heavy pack

REBECCA I leave you here, Jacob, and heartily  
you pray

That, when need shall require, you be not far away

JACOB I shall be ready, mother, whensoe'er you  
call

[*Exit Rebecca*]

## ACTUS QUARTI, SCÆNA SEPTIMA

JACOB MIDO

JACOB O, how happy is that same daughter or  
that son,

Whom the parents love with hearty affection !

And among all others how fortunate am I,

Whom my mother Rebecca tend'reth so greatly ?

If it lay in her to do any good, ye see,

She would do her earnest devoir to prefer me

But as for this matter, which she doth now intend,

Without thy aid, O Lord, how should it come to  
end ?

Nevertheless, forasmuch as my said mother

Worketh upon thy word, O Lord, and none other,

It shall become me to show mine obedience,

And to thy promise, O Lord, to give due credence

For what is so impossible to man's judgment,

Which thou canst not with a beck perform incontinent ?

Therefore thy will, O Lord, be done for evermore

MIDO O Jacob, I was never so afeard afore

JACOB Why, what new thing is chanced, Mido,  
I pray thee ?

MIDO Old Isaac, your father, heard your young  
kid blea

He asked what it was I said, a kid  
Who brought it from the fold ? I said you did  
For what purpose ? forsooth, sir, said I,  
There is some matter that Jacob would remedy  
And where has thou been so long, little Mido,  
quod he,  
That all this whole hour thou wert not once with  
me ?

Forsooth (quod I), when I went from you last of all,  
You bad me be no moire, but be ready at your  
call

JACOB But of the kid's bleaing he did speak no  
more ?

MIDO No, but, and if he had called me afore,  
I must have told him all, or else I must have made  
a lie,

Which would not have been a good boy's part truly  
But I will to him, and no longer here remain,  
Lest he should happen to call for Mido again

[*Exit Mido*]

## ACTUS QUARTI, SCÆNA OCTAVA

JACOB REBECCA DEBORAH

JACOB I were best also to get me into the tent  
That, if my mother need me I may be present  
But I see her come forth, and nurse Deborah also,  
And bring the gear with them, whatsoe'er it shall  
do

REBECCA Where is my son Jacob ? I do him  
now espy  
Come apace, Deborah, I pray thee let us hie,  
That all thing were dispatched somewhat to my  
mind



DEBORAH It is happy, that Jacob ready here  
ye find

JACOB Mother, what have ye brought, and  
what things are those?

REBECCA Gear that I have prepared to serve  
our purpose,

And because that Esau is so rough with hair,  
I have brought sleeves of kid next to thy skin to  
wear

They be made glovelike, and for each finger a  
stall

So that thy father's feeling soon beguile they shall  
Then have I brought a collar of ough kid's hair,  
Fast unto the skin round about thy neck to wear  
Come, let me do it on, and if Isaac feel,  
He shall therewith be beguiled wondrous well

*[Here she doth the sleeves upon Jacob's arms]*

JACOB And what shall this gear do, that ye  
have brought?

REBECCA. It shall serve anon, I warrant you,  
take no thought

Now, thoroughly to ravish thy father Isaac,  
Thou shalt here incontinent put upon thy back  
Esau his best apparel, whose fragrant flavour  
Shall conjure Isaac to bear thee his favour

DEBORAH Marry, sir, now is master Jacob trim  
indeed,

That is all tricksy and gallant, so God me speed!  
Now I see apparel setteth out a man

Doth it become Esau so? nay, beshrew me then

REBECCA Ye may now go in, nurse, and leave  
looking on him

DEBORAH I go, marry, sir, Jacob is now gay  
and trim

*[Jacob standeth looking on himself]*

JACOB No, forsooth, mother, this raiment liketh  
not me

I could with mine own gear better contented be  
And, but for satisfying of your mind and will,  
I would not wear it, to have it for mine own still  
I love not to wear another bird's feathers  
Mine own poor homely gear will serve for all  
weathers

REBECCA Well, content thyself, and follow my  
mind this day

Now the meat by this time is ready, I dare say  
Before that with too much *enough* it be all spilt,  
Take thy time, and assail thy father, when thou  
wilt

JACOB Yea, but have ye provided, mother, I  
you pray,  
That nobody within may your counsel bewray ?

REBECCA. I warrant the matter all safe from  
uttering,

I have stopped all mouths fro once muttering  
Therefore, while the time serveth, I thee warn,  
To slack, when all things are ready, may do harm

JACOB Go before, and I follow but my cheeks  
will blush red,  
To be seen among our folk thus appareled

#### ACTUS QUARTI, SCÆNA NONA.

ISAAC MIDO JACOB

ISAAC Come, Mido, for without thee I can  
nothing do

MIDO What is it, sir, that ye would have my  
help unto ?

ISAAC Nothing but to sit abroad, and take  
th' open air

MIDO That shall be well done, the weather is  
very fair

ISAAC Praised be the God of my father Abraham,  
Who sendeth all thing needful for the use of man,  
And most tenderly provideth he for me Isaac,  
Better than I can feel or perceive what I lack

*Enter JACOB disguised*

JACOB Where is my most dear father? as I  
would have it,  
Taking the open air, here I see him sit  
O my most dear father Isaac, well thou be!

ISAAC Here I am, my sweet son, and who art  
thou, tell me?

JACOB Dear father, I am Esau, thine eldest son,  
According as thou badest me, so have I done  
Come in, dear father, and eat of my venison,  
That thy soul may give unto me thy benison

ISAAC But how hast thou sped so soon? let me  
understand

JACOB The Lord thy God at the first brought  
it to my hand

ISAAC And art thou Esau, mine elder son  
indeed?

JACOB To ask that question, father, what doth  
it need?

ISAAC Come near, that I may feel, whether  
thou be he or not,  
For Esau is rough of hair as any goat  
Let me feel thy hand, right! Esau, by the hair  
And yet the voice of Jacob soconeth in mine ear  
God bless thee, my son, and so will I do anon,  
As soon as I have tasted of thy venison  
Come on, lead me in, I will eat a pittance  
A little thing, God wot, to me is suffisance

*[They go in]*

MIDO I may now go play, Jacob leadeth Isaac

But I never saw such a pretty knack,  
 How Jacob beguiled his father, how sleightly  
 Now I see it true, the blind eat many a fly '<sup>1</sup>  
 I quaked once for fear, that Jacob would be caught,  
 But, as hap was, he had his lesson well taught  
 But what will Esau say, when he cometh home ?  
 Choose him , but for me to go in it is wisdom

[*Exit*

## ACTUS QUARTI, SCÆNA DECIMA

REBECCA ABRA

REBECCA Now I beseech the Lord prosper  
 Jacob my son  
 In our hardy enterprise, which we have begun  
 Isaac is eating such meat as he doth love,  
 Which thing to bless Jacob, I doubt not, will him  
 move  
 If he obtain the blessing, as I trust he shall,  
 Then shall my soul give to God laud perpetual  
 But I will in to harken, how the thing doth frame  
 ABRA <sup>1</sup> Come in, dame Rebecca  
 REBECCA Who is it, that doth me name?  
 ABRA My master Isaac is coming forth straight  
 way  
 REBECCA He shall not find me here in no wise,  
 if I may

## ACTUS QUARTI, SCÆNA VNDECIMA

ISAAC JACOB

ISAAC Set me down on the bench, where thou  
 didst me first find

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *Mido*

Now forsooth I have ate meat even to my mind  
It hath refreshed my soul wonderfully well  
Nor never drank I better wine that I can tell

JACOB If it were to your liking, I am very glad

ISAAC It was the best meat and wine that ever  
I had

Come kiss me, son Esau, with the kiss of peace,

[*Jacob kisseth Isaac, and then kneeleth down  
to have his blessing*]

That my love towards thee may the more increase  
I bless thee here for ever, my son, in this place,  
The Lord my God of might endue thee with his  
grace

What sweet flavour my son's raiment doth yield !  
Even the fragrant smell that cometh from a field,  
Which the Lord hath blessed, and the same Lord  
bless thee

With the dew of heaven ! the Lord thy ground in-  
crease,

That the fatness of the earth may never cease !

The Lord send thee abundance of corn and wine,

And prosper continually all thing that is thine !

The Lord make great people servants unto thee

And nations to do homage and fealty !

And here, to succeed my place, mine heir I thee  
make,

Of all things that I have possession to take

Lord and ruler be thou over thy brethren all,

And bow to thee as head thy mother's children  
shall !

Cursed be that man, that shall thee curse or mis-  
say,

And who that blesseth thee, blessed be he for aye !

Thus here have I made my last will and testament,

Which the Lord God ratify never to repent

Serve the Lord our God, and then well shalt thou  
speed,

And he shall keep promise to multiply thy seed  
My day draweth on, for old and feeble I am  
When I die, put me to my father Abraham  
Now kiss me once again, my son, and then depart,  
And enter upon all, whereof now lord thou art

JACOB The Lord God reward your fatherly  
tenderness,  
Which ye have here showed me of your mere good-  
ness

ISAAC Go in peace, my dear son, leaving me  
here alone  
And send little Mido to lead me in anon

[*Exeat Jacob*  
Lord God, when thou shalt see time, as thou  
thinkest best,  
Dissolve this feeble carcase, and take me to thy  
rest

*Enter MIDO*

MIDO How do ye, master Isaac ? I am here now  
For my master Jacob did bid me come to you

ISAAC Nay, boy, it was not Jacob, I dare well  
say so

MIDO Forsooth, it was Jacob, if my name be  
Mido

ISAAC If that be a true tale, somebody is come  
slack,  
But, Lord, that I have done I will not now call  
back.

But yet I will go see, if I be deceived  
For indeed methought Jacob's voice I perceived.

[*Exeunt*

## ACTUS QUARTI, SCÆNA DUODECIMA

REBECCA

*[Then she speaketh kneeling, and holding up  
her hands*

REBECCA O Lord, the God of Isaac and Abraham,

I render thanks to thee, though a sinful woman,  
Because of thy word and promise true art thou,  
In sending Jacob the blessing of Esau ,  
And for thus regarding a sinner, as I am,  
I eftsoons thank thee, O Lord God of Abraham  
Thy mercy and wisdom shall I sing evermore  
And magnify thy name, for God's there is no more  
But I will to my husband Isaac, and see,  
That for this matter he take no grief at me

## ACTUS QUINTI, SCÆNA PRIMA

RAGAN

*[Ragan bringeth venison at his back*

Nay, now at last we have well sped, I warrant you  
Good luck is not evermore against Esau  
He coursed and coursed again with his dogs here  
But they could at no time take either hare or deer  
At last he killed this with his bow, as God would  
And to say that it is fat venison I be bold  
But dressed it must be at once in all the haste,  
That old father Isaac may have his repast  
Then without delay Esau shall blessed be,  
Then, faith, cock-on-hoop, all is ours ' then, who  
but he ?

But I must in, that it may be dressed in time likely,  
And I trow ye shall see it made ready quickly

*[Exit*

## ACTUS QUINTI, SCÆNA SECUNDA

MIDO

MIDO Nay now, old master Isaac (I warrant you)  
Hath blessed Jacob in the place of Esau  
At home here with us it is judged no small change,  
But a case wonderful, and also very strange  
The younger brother is made elder and again  
The elder must now serve the younger as his  
swain <sup>1</sup>  
And from henceforth we must all make courtesy  
and bow,  
Unto master Jacob, and not to Esau now  
And Esau himself must under Jacob be,  
At his commandment, even as well as we  
But I care not, I warrant you for our household  
Love Jacob better than Esau twentyfold  
None loveth Esau but for his father's sake  
But all good folks are glad Jacob's part to take  
And now by Esau no man will set a pin,  
But yonder he cometh now, I will get me in

## ACTUS QUINTI, SCÆNA TERTIA

ESAU

ESAU I trow I have now won my spurs for ever  
For once better venison killed I never,  
And though it were somewhat long, ere I could it  
take,  
Yet the goodness thereof doth some recompense  
make  
My father Isaac shall thereof have such meat,

---

<sup>1</sup> Servant



As in all his life he hath not the better eat  
Whereupon, I doubt not, after tender kissing,  
To be straight endowed with his godly blessing  
As his full and true heir in his place to succeed,  
And t' enjoy the promise that God made to his seed,  
And when I am once in my place of succession,  
And have all manner things in full possession  
I shall wring all louts and make them stoop  
(I trow),  
I shall make the slaves couch as low as dog, and  
bow  
I shall ruffle among them of another sort  
Than Isaac hath done, and with another port  
But now will I go see, what haste within they make,  
That part of my hunting my old father may take  
[Exit

## ACTUS QUINTI, SCÆNA QUARTA

ISAAC MIDO ESAU

ISAAC Mido, come, Mido, where art thou, little  
Mido?

MIDO Here ready, master Isaac, what shall I do?

ISAAC Come, lead me to mine old place, that I  
may sit down

MIDO That can I as well as any boy in this town

ISAAC O Lord my God, how deep and unsearch-  
able

Are all thy judgments, and how immutable?

Of thy justice, whom it pleaseth thee, thou dost  
reject,

Of thy mercy, whom it pleaseth thee, thou dost  
elect

In my two sons, O Lord, thou hast wrought thy  
will,

And as thy pleasure hath wrought, so shall it stand  
still

Since thou hast set Jacob in Esau his place,  
I commit him to the governance of thy grace

*Enter ESAU*

ESAU Now where is Isaac, that he may come  
and eat ?

Lo, where he is sitting abroad upon his seat  
Dear father Isaac, the Lord thy God thee save

ISAAC Who art thou, my son ? what thing  
wouldest thou have ?

ESAU I am your eldest son, Esau by my name,  
New come home from hunting, where I had joyly <sup>1</sup>  
game,

I have made meat thereof for your own appetite,  
Meat for your own tooth, wherein you will much  
delight

Come, eat your part, dear father, that, when ye  
have done,

Your soul may bless me as your hen and eldest  
son

ISAAC Ah Esau, Esau, thou comest too late,  
Another to thy blessing was predestinate,  
And clean gone it is from thee, Esau

ESAU Alas !

Then am I the unhappiest that ever was,

I would the savage beasts had my body torn

ISAAC The blessing that thou shouldest have  
had, another hath

ESAU Alas, what wretched villain hath done  
me such scath ?

ISAAC Thy brother Jacob came to me by  
subtlety,

---

<sup>1</sup> Jolly, Fr *joli*

And brought me venison, and so prevented<sup>1</sup> thee  
I ate with him, ere thou cam'st, and with my good-  
will

Blessed him I have, and blessed he shall be still  
ESAU Ah Jacob, Jacob, well may he be called  
so

For he hath undermined me times two  
For first mine heritage he took away me fro,  
And see, now hath he away my blessing also  
Ah father, father, though Jacob hath done this  
thing

Yet let me Esau also have thy blessing  
Shall all my good huntings for thee be in vain?

ISAAC That is done and passed, cannot be called  
again

Mine act must now stand in force of necessity

ESAU And hast thou never a blessing then left  
for me?

ISAAC Behold, I have made thy brother Jacob  
thy lord

ESAU A most poignant sword unto my heart is  
that word

ISAAC All his mother's children his servants  
have I made

ESAU That word is to me sharper than a razor's  
blade

ISAAC I have also 'stablished him with wine and  
corn

ESAU Woe be the day and hour that ever I was  
born!

ISAAC What am I able to do for thee, my son?

ESAU Ah Jacob, Jacob, that thou hast me thus  
undone!

O unhappy hap O misfortune! well away!  
That ever I should live to see this woful day

---

<sup>1</sup> Forestalled

But hast thou one blessing and no mo, my father?  
Let me also have some blessing, good sweet father

ISAAC Well, nature pricketh me some remorse  
on thee to have  
Behold, thy dwelling-place the earth's fatness shall  
have,  
And the dew of heaven, which down from above  
shall fall

And with dint of sword thy living get thou shall,  
And to thy brother Jacob thou shalt be servant

ESAU O, to my younger brother must I be  
servant?

O, that ever a man should be so oppressed!

ISAAC Thine own fault it is, that thou art dis-  
possessed

ESAU Father, change that piece of thy sentence  
and judgment

ISAAC Things done cannot be undone, there-  
fore be content,

Let me be in quiet, and trouble me no more

Come, Mido, in God's name, lead me in at the door

*[Exeunt Isaac and Mido]*

ESAU O, would not this chafe a man, and fret  
his guts out,

To live as an underling under such a lout?

Ah hypocrite, Ah hedgecreeper, Ah 'sembling  
wretch!

I will be even with thee for this subtle fetch

O God of Abraham, what reason is herein,

That to sle one's enemy it should be made sin?

Were not one as good his part of heaven forego,

As not to be revenged on his deadly foe?

God was angry with Cain for killing Abel

Else might I kill Jacob marvellously well

I may fortune one day him to dispatch and rid

The Lord will not see all things, something may  
be hid

But as for these misers<sup>1</sup> within my father's tent,  
 Which to the supplanting of me put their consent,  
 Not one, but I shall coil them, till they stink for  
     pain,  
 And then for their stinking coil them off flesh  
     again  
 I will take no days<sup>2</sup>, but, while the matter is hot,  
 Not one of them shall 'scape, but they shall to the  
     pot

### ACTUS QUINTI, SCÆNA QUINTA

RAGAN

Where are we now become<sup>2</sup> marry, sir, here is  
     array<sup>1</sup>  
 With Esau, my master, this is a black day  
 I told you Esau one day would shit a rag,  
 Have we not well hunted, of blessing to come  
     lag?<sup>3</sup>  
 Nay, I thought ever it would come to such a pass,  
 Since he sold his heritage like a very ass  
 But, in faith, some of them, I dare jeopard a groat,  
 If he may reach them, will have on the petticoat<sup>4</sup>

### ACTUS QUINTI, SCÆNA SEXTA

ESAU      RAGAN      ABRA      MIDO      DEBORAH

ESAU Come out, whores and thieves, come out,  
     come out, I say<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Wretches

<sup>2</sup> Lose no time

<sup>3</sup> Late

<sup>4</sup> *To have on the petticoat* is a phrase of very unusual occurrence, of which the sense may, without much difficulty or risk of error, be collected from the context

RAGAN <sup>1</sup> I told you, did I not, that there would  
be a fray? [*Aside*

ESAU Come out, little whoreson ape, come out  
of thy den

MIDO Take my life for a penny, whither shall  
I ren?<sup>2</sup>

ESAU Come out, thou little fiend, come out,  
thou skittish gill

ABRA Out, alas, alas! Esau will us all kill

ESAU And come out, thou mother Mab,<sup>3</sup> out,  
old rotten witch!

As white as midnight's arsehole or virgin pitch

Where be ye? come together in a cluster

RAGAN In faith, and these three will make a  
noble muster

ESAU Ere ye escape my fingers, ye shall all  
be taught,

For these be they which have all this against me  
wrought

MIDO I wrought not a stroke this day, but led  
Isaac

If I wrought one stroke to-day, lay me on the jack

ESAU Hence then, get thee in, and do against  
me no more

MIDO I care as much for you now, as I did  
before

ESAU What sayest thou, little thief? if I may  
thee catch [*Aside*

MIDO Ye shall run apace then, I ween, so God  
me snatch

RAGAN Now to go, Mido, ere thou art caught  
in a trip [*Exit MIDO*

<sup>1</sup> Ragan and the others must be supposed to be at the back of the stage, out of Esau's sight, but they come forward severally, and plead for themselves

<sup>2</sup> Run

<sup>3</sup> i.e., Old witch But compare Halliwell, *v* Mab

ESAU Nay, for his sake, Abra, ye shall drink of  
the whip

ABRA Nay, for God's love, good sweet master  
Esau,

Hurt not me for Mido speak for me, Ragan

RAGAN Sir, spare little Abra, she hath done  
none evil

ESAU A little fiend it is, and will be a right  
devil,

And she is one of them that love not me a deal

ABRA If ye let me go, I will love you very well

ESAU And never any more ado against me make?

ABRA Ragan shall be surety

RAGAN Sir, I undertake

ESAU Then hence, out of my sight at once, and  
get thee in

ABRA Adieu, I set not a straw by you nor a pin

ESAU What sayest thou, thou fib? once ye shall  
have a rap

RAGAN The best end of suretyship is to get a  
clap [*Aside*

ESAU Now, come on, thou old hag, what shall  
I say to thee?

DEBORAH Say what ye lust, so ye do not touch  
me

ESAU Yes, and make powder of thee, for I dare  
say thou

Hast been the cause of all this feast to Esau

DEBORAH No, it was Jacob's feast that I did  
help to dress

ESAU Nay, I thought such a witch would do  
such business

DEBORAH<sup>1</sup> But, by my truth, if I should die  
incontinent,

I knew not of the purpose, wherefore it was meant

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *Rebecca*

ESAU But wilt thou tell me truth, if I do forgive thee ?

DEBORAH Yea, if I can, Master Esau, believe me

ESAU Is it true that, when I and my brother were first born,

And I by God's ordinance came forth him before,  
Jacob came forthwith, holding me fast by the heel ?

DEBORAH It is true, I was there, and saw it very well

ESAU Is it true ? well, Jacob, I pray God I be dead,

But for my heel's sake, I will have thee by the head

What devil was in me, that I had not the grace,  
With kicking back my heel, to mar his moping face ?

But my father Isaac will not long live now,  
If he were gone, Jacob, I would soon meet with you

For my soul hateth Jacob even to the death,  
And I will ne'er but hate him, while I shall have breath

I may well dissemble, until I see a day,  
But trust me, Jacob, I will pay thee when I may  
But if ever I hear that thou speak word of this,  
I shall cut out thy tongue, I will not miss

[*This he speaketh to Deborah*]

But come on, Ragan, with me so mote I thrive,  
I will get a good sword, for thereby must I live

RAGAN Live, quod you ? we are like to live,  
God knoweth how

ESAU What, ye saucy merchant,<sup>1</sup> are ye a prater now ?

[*Exeunt ESAU and RAGAN*]

---

<sup>1</sup> A word of contempt often used in our old comedies, as we now employ *chap*



## ACTUS QUINTI, SCÆNA SEPTIMA

DEBORAH REBECCA

DEBORAH I am glad that Esau is now gone,  
certès  
For an evil-disposed man he is, doubtless  
Yet am I no gladder of his departure hence,  
Than I am that Rebecca is come in presence

*Enter REBECCA*

REBECCA Deborah, what doest thou, tarrying  
here so long?  
I came full ill afeard, lest something had been  
wrong,  
For Mido and Abra told me of Esau  
DEBORAH Indeed here he was, and departed  
hence but now  
And one thing I tell you, dame let Jacob beware,  
For Esau to mischief Jacob doth prepare  
REBECCA Call Jacob hither, that I may show  
him my mind  
Send him hither quickly, and tarry ye behind,  
That he give place awhile, it is expedient,  
And how he may be sure, I will the way invent

## ACTUS QUINTI, SCÆNA OCTAVA

JACOB REBECCA

JACOB Mother Rebecca, did ye send for me  
hither?  
REBECCA Yea, and the cause is this, thou must  
go somewhither,  
To hide thee from thy brother Esau a space  
JACOB Indeed, to men's malice we must some-  
time give place  
REBECCA He lieth in await to sle thee, if he can

Thou shalt therefore, by my reed, fle hence to  
Haran

And he with my brother Laban, a man aged,  
Till Esau's wrath be somewhat assuaged  
When all things are forgotten, and his fury passed  
I shall send for thee again in all goodly haste

JACOB Yea, but how will my father herewith  
be content?

REBECCA. Thou shalt see me win him thereto  
incontinent

And here he cometh happily Jacob, hear me,  
Make a sign to Mido, that he do not name thee,  
Then get thee in privily, till I do thee call

JACOB As ye command me, mother Rebecca, I  
shall

## ACTUS QUINTI, SCÆNA NONA

ISAAC MIDO REBECCA JACOB

ISAAC Where be ye, good wife?

MIDO My dame Rebecca is here

REBECCA I am glad, sweet husband, that I see  
you appear,

For<sup>1</sup> I have a word or two unto you to say

ISAAC Whatsoever it be, tell it me, I you pray

REBECCA Sir, ye know that now our life-days  
are but short,

And we had never so great need of comfort

Now Esau his wives being Hittites both,

Ye know, to please us are much unwilling and loth  
That if Jacob eke would take any Hittite to wife,  
Small joy should we both have or comfort of our  
life

---

<sup>1</sup> In the old copy this line is improperly given to Isaac

ISAAC Wife, ye speak this well, and I will provide therefore,  
 Call Jacob quickly, that he appear me before  
 MIDO I can run apace for him, if ye bid me go  
 REBECCA Go, hie thee at once then, like a good son, Mido  
*[Exit Mido, but returns directly with Jacob]*  
 ISAAC O Lord, save thou my son from mis-carrying  
 MIDO Come, master Jacob, ye must make no tarrying,  
 For I it is that shall be shent, if you be slack,  
 Here is your son Jacob now, master Isaac  
 ISAAC Son Jacob, make thee ready, as fast [as] thou can,  
 And in all haste possible get thee unto Laban  
 He is thine own uncle, and a right godly man,  
 Marry of his daughters, and not of Canaan  
 In Mesopotamia shalt thou lead thy life  
 The Lord prosper thee here without debate or strife,  
 And the God of Abraham prosper thee in peace,  
 He multiply thy seed, and make it to increase !  
 Now kiss me, dear son Jacob, and so go thy way  
 REBECCA Kiss me also, sweet son, and hence without delay  
 JACOB Now, most tender parents, as well with heart and word  
 I bid you well to fare, and leave you to the Lord  
 MIDO Nay, master Jacob, let me have an hand also  
 JACOB Even with all my heart farewell, little Mido  
*[Exit Jacob]*  
 ISAAC Now will I depart hence into the tent again  
 REBECCA As pleaseth God and you, but I will here remain

## ACTUS QUINTI, SCÆNA DECIMA

ESAU RAGAN REBECCA ISAAC MIDO

ESAU And is he gone indeed to mine uncle  
Laban,  
In Mesopotamia at the town of Haran?  
And is Jacob gone to the house of Bethuel?  
The whirlwind with him, and flinging fiend of  
hell!  
But I shall meet with him yet one day well enough  
And who is this? my mother? whom I see here  
now

RAGAN She stood here all this while, sn, did ye  
not her see?

ESAU Didst thou see her stand here, and  
wouldest not warn me?

REBECCA Son Esau, afoie God, thou art much  
to blame,  
And to do, as I hear of thee, is a foul shame

ESAU Mother, what is it ye heard of me of late?

REBECCA That thou dost thy brother Jacob  
deadly hate

ESAU Hate Jacob? I hate him, and will do, till  
I die,  
For he hath done me both great wrong and villany  
And that shall he well know, if the Lord give me  
life

REBECCA Fie upon thee, to speak so, like a lewd  
cattiff!

RAGAN My master Esau is of nature much hot,  
But he will be better than he saith, fear not

ESAU My birthright to sell did he not make me  
consent?

REBECCA But the same to do wert not thyself  
content?

There is no man to blame for it but thine own  
self

ESAU Yea, mother, I see that ye hold with that  
mopish elf

It is your dainty darling, your prinkox, your  
golpol,

He can never be praised enough of your soul,

He must ever be extolled above the moon

It is never amiss that he hath said or done

I would he were rocked or dandled in your lap,

Or I would with this falchion I might give him  
pap

I marvel why ye should so love him, and me not?

Ye groaned as well for the one as thother, I wot

But Jacob must be advanced in any wise

But I shall one day handle him of the new guise<sup>1</sup>

REBECCA Both on thy father's blessing and  
mine, I charge thee,

That thy soul intend never such iniquity,

Beware by the example of Cam, I thee reed,

That thou bring not the Lord's curse upon thy head

ESAU And what, should I take all this wrong  
at Jacob's hand?

REBECCA Forgive, and the Lord shall prosper  
thee in the land

My son Esau, hear me, I am thy mother

For my sake, let pass this grudge against thy  
brother

RAGAN Sir, your mother's request is but reason-  
able,

Which for you to grant shall be much commend-  
able

---

<sup>1</sup> The *new guise* is a term often met with in old plays, but the application of it here is not very clear, although the meaning of the writer—in a way that he (Jacob) little expected—is sufficiently intelligible

ESAU Mother, though it be a great thing that  
ye require  
Yet must all malice pass at your desire,  
And for your cause, mother, this mine anger shall  
slake

REBECCA I thank thee, my son, that thou dost  
it for my sake

ESAU For your sake, with Jacob I will be at  
accord

REBECCA And shall I call thy father to be as  
record?

ESAU As pleaseth you, mother, I can be well  
content

REBECCA Then will I go call him hither incon-  
tinent

And where he doth already love thee very well,  
This will make him to love thee better a great deal

RAGAN Truly, sir, this is of you a right gentle  
part

At least, if it come from the bottom of your heart

ESAU It must now be thus, but when I shall  
Jacob find,  
I shall then do as God shall put into my mind

*Enter ISAAC and MIDO with REBECCA.*

REBECCA He hath at my word remitted all his  
quarrel

ISAAC Forsooth, I love him the better a great deal  
And if he be here, I would commend his doing

ESAU<sup>1</sup> All prest here, father, to tarry on your  
coming

ISAAC Son Esau, thou hast thyself well ac-  
quitted,

---

<sup>1</sup> In the old copy this word is improperly placed opposite  
the line, *That all quarrel, &c*

That all quarrel to Jacob thou hast remitted  
 It was the Lord's pleasure that it should thus be,  
 Against whose ordinance to stand is not for thee  
 But now, to the intent it may please the Lord,  
 To knit your hearts one day in a perfect concord,  
 We shall first in a song give laud unto His name,  
 And then with all gladness within confirm the same

REBECCA As ye think best, dear husband, I  
 agree thereto

ESAU Me ye may command to what ye will  
 have me to do

And so may ye do also Ragan my man

ISAAC I see none, but praise we the Lord the  
 best we can,

Call forth all our household, that with one accord  
 We may all with one voice sing unto the Lord

[Ragan calleth all to sing

*This song must be sung after the prayer*

*O Lord, the God of our father Abraham,  
 How deep and unsearchable are thy judgments !  
 Thy almighty hand did create and frame  
 Both heaven and earth, and all the elements  
 Man of the earth thou hast formed and create,  
 Some do thee worship, and some stray awry,  
 Whom pleaseth thee, thou dost choose or reprobate,  
 And no flesh can ask thee wherefore or why ?  
 Of thine own will thou didst Abraham elect,  
 Promising him seed as stars of the sky,  
 And them as thy chosen people to protect,  
 That they might thy mercies praise and magnify  
 Perform thou, O Lord, thine eternal decree  
 To me and my seed, the sons of Abraham,  
 And whom thou hast chosen thine own people to be,  
 Guide and defend to the glory of thy name*

FINIS.

*[Then entereth the Poet, and the rest stand still  
till he have done]*

THE POET When Adam, for breaking God's  
commandment,

Had sentence of death, and all his posterity  
Yet the Lord our God, who is omnipotent,  
Had in his own self by his eternal decree  
Appointed to restore man, and to make him free  
He purposed to save mankind by his mercy,  
Whom he once had created unto his glory  
Yet not all flesh did he then predestinate,  
But only the adopted children of promise  
For he foreknew that many would degenerate,  
And wilfully give cause to be put from that bliss,  
So on God's behalf no manner default there is,  
But where he chooseth, he showeth his great  
mercy

And where he refuseth, he doth none injury,  
But thus far surmounteth man's intlection,<sup>1</sup>  
To attain or conceive, and (much more) to discuss  
All must be referred to God's election  
And to his sacred judgment It is meet for us,  
With Paul the apostle, to confess, and say thus  
O, the deepness of the riches of God's wisdom <sup>1</sup>  
How unsearchable are his ways to man's reason <sup>2</sup>  
Our part therefore is first to believe God's word,  
Not doubting but that he will his elected save  
Then to put full trust in the goodness of the Lord,  
That we be of the number, which shall mercy  
have

Thirdly, so to live, as we may his promise crave  
Thus if we do, we shall Abraham's children be,  
And come with Jacob to endless felicity

*[All the rest of the actors answer, Amen]*

---

<sup>1</sup> Understanding



*Then followeth the prayer*

ISAAC Now unto God let us pray for all the  
whole clergy,  
To give them grace to advance God's honour and  
glory

REBECCA Then for the Queen's majesty let us  
pray  
Unto God to keep her in health and wealth night  
and day,

And that, of his mere mercy and great benignity,  
He will defend and maintain her estate and dignity,  
That she, being grieved with any outward hostility,  
May against her enemies always have victory

JACOB God save the Queen's counsellors most  
noble and true,  
And with all godliness their noble hearts endue

ESAU Lord save the nobility and preserve them  
all

And prosper the Queen's subjects universal

AMEN

*Thus endeth this Comedy or Enterlude of  
Jacob and Esau*

THE DISOBEDIENT CHILD.

## THE PLAYERS' NAMES

THE PROLOGUE SPEAKER

THE RICH MAN

THE RICH MAN'S SON

THE MAN COOK

THE WOMAN COOK

THE YOUNG WOMAN

THE SERVINGMAN

THE PRIEST

THE DEVIL

THE PERORATOR

## MR HALLIWELL'S PREFACE TO THE FORMER EDITION <sup>1</sup>

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So little is known respecting the history of the following tract, that it is rather from an unwillingness to depart from the usual custom of affixing introductions to our reprints, than from any expectation of satisfying the slightest curiosity, that a few lines are here prefixed. The interlude of "The Disobedient Child" was written about the middle of the sixteenth century, by Thomas Ingelend, who is described in the early printed copy as 'late student in Cambridge,' and his fame seems to rest entirely on that production, for he is not to be traced in any other early literary record <sup>2</sup>. It has been supposed by some writers, from a few indistinct allusions in the play to Catholic customs, that it was composed in the reign of Henry VIII, but if this be the case, the notice of Queen Elizabeth, introduced towards the close of the drama, must be an interpolation, a supposition not unlikely to be correct, for the audience are

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<sup>1</sup> [The interlude of "The Disobedient Child," edited by J O Halliwell Percy Society, 1848]

<sup>2</sup> [But see Cooper's "Cambridge Athenæ," i, 554]

elsewhere reminded to "serve the king" The printed edition by Colwell is without date, but it was published about the year 1560 Two copies of this work which I have collated differ in some slight particulars from each other, but there is not sufficient reason for thinking that there were two editions, for it was formerly a very common practice to correct and alter the press whilst the impression was being taken <sup>1</sup>

[It is observable that the present interlude marks a considerable advance, in point of literary merit, on those which precede it in this collection The author was evidently a man of taste and judgment, and many passages might be pointed out which possess no mean share of picturesqueness, elegance, and dramatic propriety

Contrary to the usual practice, in old as well as modern pieces, "The Disobedient Child" concludes unhappily, though without any attempt at a highly wrought tragical catastrophe, the Rich man persists in his unrelenting conduct, and we are left to imagine that his son returns to live and die in misery with his temerarious wife ]

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<sup>1</sup> [The Bridgewater copy of the original edition was most obligingly collated for the present writer by Mr Alexander Smith, of Glasgow It affords numerous corrections of the Percy Society's text ]

# THE DISOBEDIENT CHILD.<sup>1</sup>

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## THE PROLOGUE

### THE PROLOGUE SPEAKER

Now, forasmuch as in these latter days,  
Throughout the whole world in every land,  
Vice doth encrease, and virtue decays,  
Iniquity having the upper hand,  
We therefore intend, good gentle audience,  
A pretty short interlude to play at this present  
Desiring your leave and quiet silence  
To show the same, as is meet and expedient<sup>2</sup>  
The sum whereof, matter and argument,  
In two or three verses briefly to declare,  
Since that it is for an honest intent,  
I will somewhat bestow my care  
In the city of London there was a rich man  
Who, loving his son most tenderly,  
Moved him earnestly now and then,

---

<sup>1</sup>[The full title is *A pretty and mery new Enterlude, called The Disobedient Child, compiled by Thomas Ingelend, late Student in Cambridge Imprinted at London, in Flete street, beneath the Conduit, by Thomas Colwell 4<sup>o</sup>*]

<sup>2</sup>These first eight lines are also found in the interlude introduced into the play of *Sir Thomas More*, printed by the Shakespeare Society, p 60 —Halliwell

That he would give his mind to study,  
Saying that by knowledge, science and learning,  
Is at the last gotten a pleasant life,  
But through the want and lack of this thing  
Is purchased poverty, sorrow and strife  
His son, notwithstanding this gentle monition,  
As one that was clean devoid of grace,  
Did turn to a mock and open derision  
Most wickedly with an unshamefast<sup>1</sup> face,  
Insomuch that, contrary to his father's will,  
Unto a young woman he did consent,  
Whereby of lust he might have his fill,  
And married the same incontinent<sup>2</sup>  
Not long after that, the child began  
To feel his wife's great frowardness,  
And called himself unhappy man,  
Oppressed with pains and heaviness  
Who, before that time, did live blessedly  
Whilst he was under his father's wing,  
But now, being wedded, mourning and misery  
Did him torment without ending  
But now it is time for me to be going,  
And hence to depart for a certain space,  
For I do hear the Rich Man coming  
With the wanton boy into this place  
*[Here the Prologue Speaker goeth out, and in  
cometh the Rich Man and his son]*

SON Father, I beseech you, father, show me the  
way,  
What thing I were best to take in hand,  
Whereby this short life so spend I may,  
That all grief and trouble I might withstand

---

<sup>1</sup> Without shame—shameless

<sup>2</sup> Immediately See "Othello," Act iv sc 3

FATHER. What is the meaning, my child, I thee pray,  
This question to demand of me?  
For that thing to do I am glad alway,  
Which should not be grievous to thee

SON. Marry, but therefore of you counsel I take,  
Seeing now my childhood I am clean past,  
That unto me ye plainly do make  
What to a young man is best for to taste

FATHER. I see nothing truly, my son, so meet,  
And to prove so profitable for thee,  
As unto the school to move thy feet,  
With studious lads there for to be

SON. What, the school? nay, father, nay!  
Go to the school is not the best way

FATHER. Say what thou list, for I cannot invent  
A way more commodious to my judgment<sup>1</sup>

SON. It is well known how that ye have loved  
Me heretofore at all times most tenderly,  
But now (me-think) ye have plainly showed  
Certain tokens of hatred,  
For if I should go to my book after your advice,  
Which have spent my childhood so pleasantly,  
I may then seem driven out of paradise,  
To take pain and woe, grief and misery  
All things I had rather sustain and abide,  
The business of the school once cast aside,  
Therefore, though ye cry, till ye reve<sup>1</sup> asunder,  
I will not meddle with such a matter

FATHER. Why, cannot I thee thus much persuade?

For that in my mind is the best trade

SON. When all is said and all is done,

---

<sup>1</sup> That is, according to my judgment. See "Icar," Act  
1 sc 4 — *Hallwell*

<sup>1</sup> To split, or burst. Generally spelt *rue*



Concerning all things, both more and less,  
Yet like to the school none under the sun  
Bringeth to children so much heaviness

FATHER What, though it be painful, what,  
though it be grievous,  
For so be all things at the first learning,  
Yet marvellous pleasure it bringeth unto us,  
As a reward for such painstaking  
Wherefore come off, and be of good cheer,  
And go to thy book without any fear,  
For a man without knowledge (as I have read)  
May well be compared to one that is dead

SON No more of the school, no more of the  
book,  
That woful work is not for my purpose,  
For upon those books I may not look  
If so I did, my labour I should lose

FATHER Why then to me thy fancy [doth] express,  
That the school matters to thee are counted weariness

SON Even as to a great man, wealthy and rich,  
Service and bondage is a hard thing,  
So to a boy, both dainty and nice,<sup>1</sup>  
Learning and study is greatly displeasing

FATHER What, my child, displeasing, I pray  
thee,  
That maketh a man live so happily?

SON Yea, by my troth, such kind of wisdom  
Is to my heart, I tell you, very loathsome

FATHER What trial thereof hast thou taken,  
That the school of thee is so ill bespoken?

SON What trial thereof would ye fain know?  
Nothing more easy than this to show

---

<sup>1</sup> Both tender and delicate [Here, as pointed out in a note to Heywood's "Four P P" *supra*, the word *nice* is to be pronounced *nich*]

At other boys' hands I have it learned,  
And that of those truly, most of all other,  
Which for a certain time have remained  
In the house and prison of a schoolmaster

FATHER I dare well say that there is no misery,  
But rather joy, pastime and pleasure  
Always with scholars keeping company  
No life to this, I thee well assure

SON It is not true, father, which you do say,  
The contrary thereof is proved alway,  
For as the brut goeth by many a one,  
Their tender bodies both night and day  
Are whipped and scourged, and beat<sup>1</sup> like a stone,  
That from top to toe the skin is away

FATHER Is there not (say they) for them in this  
case

Given other while for pardon some place?

SON None, truly, none, but that alas, alas,  
Diseases among them do grow apace,  
For out of their back and side doth flow  
Of very gore-blood marvellous abundance,  
And yet for all that is not suffered to go,  
Till death be almost seen in their countenance  
Should I be content thither then to run,  
Where the blood from my breech thus should  
spun,<sup>2</sup>

So long as my wits shall be mine own,  
The schoolhouse for me shall stand alone<sup>3</sup>

FATHER But I am sure that this kind of fashion  
Is not showed to children of honest condition

SON Of truth, with these masters is no difference,

<sup>1</sup> Beaten

<sup>2</sup> [Query same as *spwyn*, to burst or break out See Way's edit of the "Promptorium," v *Spwyn*]

<sup>3</sup> Compare "Troilus and Cressida," l. 2

For alike towards all is their wrath and violence  
FATHER Son, in this point thou art quite deceived,

And without doubt falsely persuaded,  
For it is not to be judged that any schoolmaster  
Is of so great fierceness and cruelty,  
And of young infants so sore a tormentor,  
That the breath should be about to leave the body

SON Father, this thing I could not have believed,  
But of late days I did behold

An honest man's son hereby buried,  
Which through many stripes was dead and cold

FATHER Peraventure, the child of some disease did labour,

Which was the cause of his sepulture <sup>1</sup>

SON With no disease, surely, was he disquieted,  
As unto me it was then reported

FATHER If that with no such thing he were infected,

What was the cause that he departed ?

SON Men say that of <sup>2</sup> this man, his bloody master,

Who like a lion most commonly frowned,  
Being hanged up by the heels together,  
Was belly and buttocks grievously whipped,  
And last of all (which to speak I tremble), <sup>3</sup>

That his head to the wall he had often crushed <sup>4</sup>

FATHER Thus to think, son, thou art beguiled verily,

And I would wish thee to suppose the contrary,

---

<sup>1</sup> Burial From the Latin

<sup>2</sup> i e , By

<sup>3</sup> [Original reads *trembled* ]

<sup>4</sup> [This account, if founded on fact, is a curious illustration of the scholastic discipline of that period We know that Udall the dramatist was remarkable for his severity to his pupils at Eton ]

And not for such tales my counsel to forsake,  
Which only do covet thee learned to make

SON If Demosthenes and Tully were present truly,  
They could not print <sup>1</sup> it within my head [more]  
deeply

FATHER Yet, by thy father's will and intercession,  
Thou shalt be content that thing to pardon

SON Command what ye list, that only excepted,  
And I will be ready your mind to fulfil,  
But whereas I should to the school have resorted,  
My hand to the palmer <sup>2</sup> submitting still,  
I will not obey ye therein, to be plain,  
Though with a thousand strokes I be slain

FATHER Woe is me, my son, woe is me <sup>1</sup>  
This heavy and doleful day to see

SON I giant indeed I am your son,  
But you my father shall not be,  
If that you will cast me into that prison,  
Where torn in pieces ye might me see

FATHER Where I might see thee toin and rent ?  
O Lord, I could not such a deed invent <sup>1</sup>

SON Nay, by the mass, I hold <sup>2</sup> ye a groat,  
Those cruel tyrants cut not my throat  
Better it were myself did slay,  
Than they with the rod my flesh should flay.  
Well, I would we did this talk omit,  
For it is loathsome to me every whit

FATHER What trade then, I pray thee, shall I  
devise,  
Whereof thy living at length may arise?

<sup>1</sup> Impress Compare "Much Ado about Nothing," iv 1  
—Halliwell

<sup>2</sup> [Querv, the schoolmaster, so called from inflicting on the pupil with a cane cuts on the hand]

<sup>3</sup> Bet See "Taming of the Shrew"—

"Now by Saint Jany,  
I hold you a penny"—Halliwell

Wilt thou follow warfare, and a soldier be 'ppointed,  
And so among Troyans and Romans be numbered ?

SON See ye not, masters, my father's advice ?  
Have ye the like at any time heard ?

To will me thereto he is not wise,  
If my years and strength he did regard ,  
Ye speak worse and worse, whatsoever ye say ,  
This manner of life is not a good way,  
For no kind of office can me please,  
Which is subject to wounds and strokes always

FATHER Somewhat to do it is meet and convenient ,

Wilt thou then give thy diligent endeavour  
To let thy youth dishonestly be spent,  
And do as poor knaves, which jaxes<sup>1</sup> do scoun ?  
For I do not see that any good art,  
Or else any honest science or occupation,  
Thou wilt be content to have a part,  
After thy father's mind and exhortation

SON Ha, ha, ha, ha, labour in very deed !  
God send him that life which stands in need  
There be many fathers that children have,  
And yet not make the worst of them a slave,  
Might not you of yourself be well ashamed,  
Which would have your son thither constrained ?

FATHER I would not have thee driven to that  
succour,  
Yet for because the scriptures declare,  
That he should not eat, which will not labour,  
Some work to do it must be thy care

SON Father, it is but a folly with you to strive,  
But yet notwithstanding I hope to thrive

FATHER That this thine intent may take good  
success,  
I pray God heartily of his goodness

---

<sup>1</sup> Jakes Compare "Lear," ii 2 —*Hallwell*

SON Well, well, shall I in few words rehearse  
What thing doth most my conscience pierce

FATHER Therewith I am, son, very well contented

SON Yea, but I think that ye will not be pleased

FATHER Indeed, peradventure it may so chance

SON Nay, but I pray ye, without any perchance,  
Shall not my request turn to your grievance?

FATHER If it be just and lawful, which thou dost require

SON Both just and lawful, have ye no fear

FATHER Now therefore ask, what is thy petition?

SON Lo, this it is, without further dilation,<sup>1</sup>  
For so much as all young men for this my beauty,  
As the moon the stars, I do far excel,  
Therefore out of hand<sup>2</sup> with all speed possibly  
To have a wife, methink, would do well,  
For now I am young, lively, and lusty,  
And welcome besides to all men's company

FATHER Good Lord, good Lord, what do I hear!

SON Is this your beginning to perform my desire?

FATHER Alas! my child, what meaneth thy doting?

Why dost thou covet thy own undoing?

SON (*Aside*) I know not in the world how to do the thing,  
That to his stomach may be delighting

FATHER Why, foolish idiot, thou goest about a wife,

Which is a burthen and yoke all thy life

SON Admit she shall as a burthen with me remain,

Yet will I take one, if your good-will I attain

---

<sup>1</sup> [Detail, or circumlocution]

<sup>2</sup> At once

FATHER Son, it shall not be thus, by my counsel

SON I trust ye will not me otherwise compel

FATHER If thou were as wise as I have judged thee,

Thou wouldest in this case be ruled by me

SON To follow the contrary I cannot be turned ,  
My heart thereon is stiffly fixed

FATHER What, I say, about thine own destruction ?

SON No, no, but about mine own salvation  
For if I be helped, I swear by the mass,  
It is only marriage that brings it to pass  
It is not the school, it is not the book  
It is not science or occupation,  
It is not to be a barber or cook,  
Wherein is now set my consolation ,  
And since it is thus, be, father, content ,  
For to marry a wife I am full bent

FATHER Well, if thou wilt not, my son, be ruled,  
But needs will follow thine own foolishness,  
Take heed hereafter, if thou be troubled,  
At me thou never seek redress ,  
For I am certain thou canst not abide  
Any pain at all, grief or vexation  
Thy childhood with me so easily did slide,  
Full of all pastime and delectation ,  
And if thou wouldest follow the book and learning,  
And with thyself also take a wise way,  
Then thou mayst get a gentleman's living,  
And with many other bear a great sway <sup>1</sup>  
Besides this, I would in time to come,  
After my power and small hability,  
Help thee and further thee, as my wisdom  
Should me most counsel for thy commodity

---

<sup>1</sup> Compare "Comedy of Errors," Act II sc 1—*Hallivell*

And such a wife I would prepare for thee  
As should be virtuous, wise, and honest,  
And give thee with her after my degree,  
Whereby thou mightest always live in rest

SON I cannot, I tell ye again, so much of my  
life

Consume at my book without a wife

FATHER I perceive therefore I have done too  
well,

And showed overmuch favour to thee,  
That now against me thou dost rebel,  
And for thine own furtherance wilt not agree,  
Wherefore of my goods thou gettest not a penny,  
Nor any succour else at my hands,  
For such a child is most unworthy  
To have any part of his father's lands

SON I do not esteem, father, your goods or  
lands,

Or any part of all your treasure,  
For I judge it enough to be out of bands,  
And from this day forward to take my pleasure

FATHER Well, if it shall chance thee thy folly  
to repent,

As thou art like within short space,  
Think none but thyself worthy to be shent,<sup>1</sup>  
Letting my counsel to take no place

SON As touching that matter, I will no man  
blame

Now, farewell, father, most heartily for the same

FATHER Farewell, my son, depart in God's name !

---

<sup>1</sup> Blamed, scolded See "Merrie Wives of Windsor," i. 4  
The older meaning of the term is *ruined*, but Elizabethan  
writers generally employ it in the sense here mentioned —  
*Halliwel* [I do not agree The older sense is, I think, the  
only one admissible, yet, Nares cites a passage from Shake-  
speare which may shake this position See *v Shend*, No 1,  
second quotation ]



SON Room<sup>1</sup> I say, room, let me be gone  
 My father, if he list, shall tarry alone  
*[Here the Son goeth out, and the Rich  
 Man tarryeth behind alone]*

## THE FATHER

Now at the last I do myself consider,  
 How great grief it is and heaviness  
 To every man that is a father,  
 To suffer his child to follow wantonness  
 If I might live a hundred years longer,  
 And should have sons and daughters many,  
 Yet for this boy's sake I will not suffer  
 One of them all at home with me to tarry,  
 They should not be kept thus under my wing,  
 And have all that which they desire,  
 For why it is but their only undoing,  
 And, after the proverb, we put oil to the fire.<sup>2</sup>  
 Wherefore we parents must have a regard  
 Our children in time for to subdue,  
 Or else we shall have them ever untoward,  
 Yea, spiteful, disdainful, naught and untrue  
 And let us them thrust away to the school,  
 Whereby at their books they may be kept under  
 And so we shall shortly their courage cool,  
 And bring them to honesty, virtue and nurture  
 But, alas, now-a-days (the more is the pity),  
 Science and learning is so little regarded,  
 That none of us doth muse or study  
 To see our children well taught and instructed  
 We deck them, we trim them with gorgeous array,  
 We pamper and feed them, and keep them so gay,

---

<sup>1</sup> Compare the 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' ii 1 —  
*Hallwell*

<sup>2</sup> "Bring oil to fire" (*King Lear*, ii 2) Compare also  
 "All's Well that ends Well," v 3 — *Hallwell*

That in the end of all this they be our foes  
 We bass them, [we] kiss them, we look round about,  
 We marvel and wonder to see them so lean,  
 We ever anon do invent and seek out  
 To make them go tricky,<sup>1</sup> gallant, and clean  
 Which is nothing else but the very provoking  
 To all unthriftiness, vice, and iniquity,  
 It puffeth them up, it is an alluring  
 Their fathers and mothers at length to defy  
 Which thing mine own son doth plainly declare,  
 Whom I always entirely have loved,  
 He was so my joy, he was so my care,  
 That now of the same I am despised  
 And how he is hence from me departed,  
 He hath no delight with me to dwell,  
 He is not merry, until he be married,  
 He hath of knavery took such a smell<sup>2</sup>  
 But yet seeing that he is my son,  
 He doth me constrain bitterly to weep,  
 I am not (methink) well till I be gone,  
 For this place I can no longer keep

[*Here the Rich Man goeth out, and the two  
 Cooks cometh in, first the one, and then  
 the other*]

#### THE MAN-COOK

Make haste, Blanche, blab it out, and come away,  
 For we have enough to do all this whole day,  
 Why, Blanche, blab it out, wilt thou not come,  
 And knowest what business there is to be done?<sup>2</sup>  
 If thou may be set with the pot at thy nose,  
 Thou carest not how other matters goes,

<sup>1</sup> "My tricky spirit" (*Tempest*, v 1) — *Hallwell*

<sup>2</sup> "Smell of calumny" (*Measure for Measure*, II 4) — *Hallwell*

Come away, I bid thee, and tarry no longer,  
To trust to thy help I am much the better !

## THE MAID-COOK

What a murrain, I say, what a noise dost thou  
make !

I think that thou be not well in thy wits !

I never heard man on this sort to take,

With such angry words and hasty fits

MAN Why, dost thou remember what is to be  
bought

For the great bridal against to-morrow ?

The market must be in every place sought

For all kinds of meats, God give thee sorrow !

MAID What banging, what cursing, Long-tongue,  
is with thee !

I made as much speed as I could possibly ,

I-wis thou mightest have tarried for me,

Until in all points I had been ready ,

I have for thee looked full oft heretofore,

And yet for all that said never the more

MAN Well, for this once I am with thee content,

So that hereafter thou make more haste ,

Or else, I tell thee, thou wilt it repent,

To loiter so long, till the market be past

For there must be bought beef, veal and mutton,

And that even such as is good and fat,

With pig, geese, conies, and capon ,

How sayest thou, Blanche ? blab it out unto that ?

MAID I cannot tell, Long-tongue, what I should  
say ,

Of such good cheer I am so glad,

That if I would not eat at all that day,

My belly to fill I were very mad !

MAN There must be also pheasant and swan ,

There must be heronsew, partridge, and quail ,

And therefore I must do what I can,  
That none of all these the gentleman fail  
I dare say he looks for many things mo,  
To be prepared against to-morn,  
Wherefore, I say, hence let us go  
My feet do stand upon a thorn

MAID Nay, good Long-tongue, I pray once again  
To hear yet of my mind a word or twain

MAN Come off, then dispatch, and speak it  
quickly,

For what thing it is thou causest me tarry

MAID Of whence is this gentleman that to mor-  
row is married?

Where doth his father and his mother dwell?  
Above forty miles he hath travelled,  
As yesternight his servant did tell

MAN In very deed he comes a great way,  
With my master he may not long abide,  
It hath cost him so much on costly array,  
That money out of his purse apace doth slide  
They say that his friends be rich and wealthy,  
And in the city of London have their dwelling,  
But yet of them all he hath no penny  
To spend and bestow here at his wedding  
And if it be true that his servant did say,  
He hath utterly lost his friends' good-will,  
Because he would not their counsel obey,  
And in his own country<sup>1</sup> tarry still,  
As for this woman, which he shall marry,  
At Saint Albans always hath spent her life,  
I think she be a shrew, I tell thee plainly,  
And full of debate, malice and strife

MAID Though I never saw this woman before,  
Which hither with him this gentleman brought,  
Yet nevertheless I have tokens in store,

---

<sup>1</sup> Often used formerly for county — *Hall's ill*

To judge of a woman that is forward and naught  
 The tip of her nose is as sharp as mine,  
 Her tongue and her tune<sup>1</sup> is very shrill,  
 I warrant her she comes of an ungracious kin,  
 And loveth too much her pleasure and will  
 What though she be now so neat and so nice,  
 And speaketh as gentle as ever I heard  
 Yet young men, which be both witty and wise,  
 Such looks and such words should not regard

MAN Blanche, blab it out, thou sayest very true,

I think thou beginnest at length to preach  
 This thing to me is strange and new,  
 To hear such a fool young men to teach

MAID A fool ! mine own Long-tongue ! why,  
 call'st thou me fool !

Though now in the kitchen I waste the day,  
 Yet in times past I went to school,  
 And of my Latin primer I took assay

MAN Masters, this woman did take such assay,  
 And then in those days so applied her book,  
 That one word thereof she carried not away,  
 But then of a scholar was made a cook  
 I dare say she knoweth not how her primer began,  
 Which of her master she learned then

MAID I trow it began with *Domine labia, aperies*

MAN What, did it begin with *butter de peas* ?

MAID I tell thee again, with *Domine, labia  
 aperies,*

If now to hear it be thine ease

MAN How, how, with, *my madam lay in the  
 pease ?*

MAID I think thou art mad ! with *Domine, labia  
 aperies*

MAN Yea, marry, I judged it went such ways,

---

<sup>1</sup> Voice

It began with, *Dorothy, lay up the keys* <sup>1</sup>

MAID Nay then, good night, I perceive by  
this gear,

That none is so deaf as who will not hear,

I spake as plainly as I could devise,

Yet me understand thou canst in no wise <sup>1</sup>

MAN Why, yet once again, and I will better  
listen,

And look upon thee how thy lips do open

MAID Well, mark then, and hearken once for all,  
Or else hear it again thou never shall,

My book, I say, began with *Domine, labia aperies*

MAN Fie, fie, how slow am I of understanding <sup>1</sup>

Was it all this while, *Domine, labia aperies* <sup>2</sup>

Belike I have lost my sense of hearing,

With broiling and burning in the kitchen o' days <sup>1</sup>

MAID I promise thee thou seemest to have done  
little better,

For that I wot in my life I never saw

One like to thyself in so easy a matter,

Unless he were deaf, thus play the daw <sup>2</sup>

MAN Come on, come on, we have almost for-  
gotten

Such plenty of victuals as we should buy,

It were alms,<sup>3</sup> by my troth, thou were well beaten,

Because so long thou hast made me tarry

MAID Tush, tush, we shall come in very good  
season,

If so be thou goest as fast as I,

Take up thy basket, and quickly have done,

We will be both there by and by

<sup>1</sup> In the daytime — *Hallwell* [Simply o' days, as printed here]

<sup>2</sup> The simpleton See 1, "Henry VI" — *Hallwell*

<sup>3</sup> A common phrase, equivalent to, it were a good thing  
See "Much Ado about Nothing," ii 3 — *Hallwell* [Not a  
good thing, but a *charity*]

MAN I for my part will never leave running,  
 Until that I come to the sign of the Whiting  
*[Here the two Cooks run out, and in cometh the  
 Young Man and the Young Woman his love]*

## THE YOUNG WOMAN

Where is my sweeting,<sup>1</sup> whom I do seek?  
 He promised me to have met me here  
 Till I speak with him I think it a week,  
 For he is my joy, he is my cheer!  
 There is no night, there is no day,  
 But that my thoughts be all of him,  
 I have no delight, if he be away  
 Such toys in my head do ever swim  
 But behold at the last, where he doth come  
 For whom my heart desired long,  
 Now shall I know, all and some,<sup>2</sup>  
 Or else I would say I had great wrong

## THE YOUNG MAN

My darling, my coney,<sup>3</sup> my bird so bright of ble<sup>4</sup>  
 Sweetheart, I say, all hail to thee!  
 How do our loves<sup>5</sup> be they fast asleep?  
 Or the old liveliness do they still keep?  
 YOUNG WOMAN Do ye ask, and<sup>5</sup> my love be  
 fast asleep?  
 O, if a woman may utter her mind,  
 My love had almost made me to weep,

<sup>1</sup> "What, sweeting, all amont" (*Taming of the Shrew*)  
 —*Hallwell*

<sup>2</sup> Altogether, entirely

<sup>3</sup> Rabbit A term of endearment.

<sup>4</sup> My lady so fair in countenance The expression is  
 common in our early romances —*Hallwell*

<sup>5</sup> If

Because that even now I did not you find,  
I thought it surely a whole hundred year,<sup>1</sup>  
Till in this place I saw you here

YOUNG MAN Alack, alack, I am soiry for  
this !

I had such business, I might not come ,  
But ye may perceive what my wit is,  
How small regard I have and wisdom

YOUNG WOMAN Whereas ye ask me concerning  
my love,

I well assure you it doth daily augment,  
Nothing can make me start or move ,  
You only to love is mine intent

YOUNG MAN And as for my love it doth never  
relent,

For of you I do dream, of you I do think ,  
To dinner and supper I never went,  
But of beer and wine to you I did drink  
Now of such thinks<sup>2</sup> therefore to make an end,  
Which pitiful lovers do cruelly torment,  
To marriage, in God's name, let us descend,  
As unto this hour we have been bent

YOUNG WOMAN Your will to accomplish I am  
as ready

As any woman, believe me truly

YOUNG MAN This ring then I give you as a  
token sure,

Whereby our love shall always endure

YOUNG WOMAN With a pure pretence your  
pledge I take gladly,

For a sign of our love, faith, and fidelity

YOUNG MAN Now I am safe, now I am glad,  
Now I do live, now I do reign ,

---

<sup>1</sup> "Twelve years since" (*Tempest*) — *Hallwell*

<sup>2</sup> A provincialism — *Hallwell* [Rather, perhaps, a Cockneyism]



Methought till now I was too sad,  
Wherefore, sadness, fly hence again !  
Away with those words which my father brought  
out !

Away with his sageness and exhortation !  
He could not make me his fool or his lout,  
And put me besides this delectation  
Did he judge that I would go to the school,  
And might my time spend after this sort ?  
I am not his calf,<sup>1</sup> nor yet his fool ,  
This virgin I kiss is my comfort !

YOUNG WOMAN Well then, I pray you, let us  
be married,

For methink from it we have long tarried

YOUNG MAN Agreed, my sweeting, it shall be  
then done,

Since that thy good-will I have gotten and won

YOUNG WOMAN There would this day be very  
good cheer,

That every one his belly may fill,  
And three or four minstrels would be here,  
That none in the house sit idle or still

YOUNG MAN Take ye no thought for abundance  
of meat,

That should be spent at our bridal,  
For there shall be enough for all men to eat,  
And minstrels besides thereto shall not fail  
The cooks, I dare say, a good while ago,  
With such kind of flesh as I did them tell,  
Are from the market both come home,  
Or else, my own coney, they do not well  
I knew, before that I come to this place,  
We should be married together this day,  
Which caused me then forthwith in this case

---

<sup>1</sup> A term of contempt for a fool See "Much Ado about Nothing," iii 3 — *Hallwell*

To send for victuals, ere I came away  
 YOUNG WOMAN Wherefore then (I pray ye)  
 shall we go to our inn,  
 And look that everything be made ready?  
 Or else all is not worth a brass pin,<sup>1</sup>  
 Such haste is required in matrimony  
 YOUNG MAN I think six o'clock it is not much  
 past,  
 But yet to the priest we will make haste,  
 That according to custom we may be both coupled,  
 And with a strong knot for ever bound fast  
 Yet, ere I depart, some song I will sing,  
 To the intent to declare my joy without fear,  
 And in the meantime you may, my sweeting,  
 Rest yourself in this little chair

## THE SONG

*Spite of his spite, which that in vain  
 Doth seek to force my fantasy,  
 I am professed for loss or gain,  
 To be thine own assuredly,  
 Wherefore let my father spite<sup>2</sup> and spurn,  
 My fantasy will never turn !  
 Although my father of busy wit  
 Doth babble still, I care not tho,  
 I have no fear, nor yet will flit,  
 As doth the water to and fro,  
 Wherefore let my father spite and spurn,  
 My fantasy will never turn !  
 For I am set and will not swerve,  
 Whom spiteful speech removeth nought,*

---

<sup>1</sup> "At a pin's fee" (*Hamlet*) —Halliwell

<sup>2</sup> Anger "And that which spites me more than all these  
 wants" (*Taming of the Shrew*) —Halliwell

*And since that I thy grace deserve,  
 I count it is not dearly bought,  
     Wherefore let my father spite and spurn,  
     My fantasy will never turn !  
 Who is afraid, let you him fly,  
 For I shall well abide the brunt  
 Maugre to his lips that listeth to lie,  
 Of busy brains as is the wont,  
     Wherefore let my father spite and spurn,  
     My fantasy will never turn !  
 Who listeth thereat to laugh or lour,<sup>1</sup>  
 I am not he that ought doth rech,<sup>2</sup>  
 There is no pain that hath the power  
 Out of my breast your love to fetch,  
     Wherefore let my father spite and spurn,  
     My fantasy will never turn !  
 For whereas he moved me to the school,  
 And only to follow my book and learning  
 He could never make me such a fool,  
 With all his soft words and fair speaking,  
     Wherefore let my father spite and spurn,  
     My fantasy will never turn !  
 This minion here, this mincing<sup>3</sup> trull,<sup>4</sup>  
 Doth please me more a thousand fold,  
 Than all the earth that is so full  
 Of precious stones, silver and gold,  
     Wherefore let my father spite and spurn,  
     My fantasy will never turn !*

<sup>1</sup> To look sad This term is often incorrectly explained 'Fye, how impatience lowreth in your face' (*Com. Err.*), &c., makes your face look sad, opposed to the "merry look"—*Hallwell* [*Lour* is simply a contracted form of *lower*]

<sup>2</sup> Care

<sup>3</sup> Compare "Merchant of Venice," III 4—*Hallwell*

<sup>4</sup> Not a term of reproach—Compare "1 Henry VI"—*Hallwell*

*Whatsoever I did it was for her sake,  
 It was for her love and only pleasure,  
 I count it no labour such labour to take,  
 In getting to me so high a treasure,  
           Wherefore let my father spite and spurn,  
           My fantasy will never turn !  
 This day I intended for to be merry,  
 Although my hard father be far hence,  
 I know no cause for to be heavy,  
 For all this cost and great expense,  
           Wherefore let my father spite and spurn,  
           My fantasy will never turn !*

YOUNG MAN How like ye this song, my own  
 sweet rose ?

Is it well made for our purpose ?

YOUNG WOMAN I never heard in all my life a  
 better,

More pleasant, more meet for the matter ,  
 Now let us go then, the morning is nigh gone,

We cannot any longer here remain

Farewell, good masters every one,

Till from the church we come again

*[Here they go out, and in cometh the Priest  
 alone]*

PRIEST Sirs, by my troth it is a world to see<sup>1</sup>  
 The exceeding negligence of every one,  
 Even from the highest to the lowest degree  
 Both goodness and conscience is clean gone  
 There is a young gentleman in this town,  
 Who this same day now must be married  
 Yet though I would bestow a crown,  
 That knave the clerk cannot be spied ,  
 For he is safe, if that in the alehouse  
 He may sit tippling of nut-brown ale,

---

<sup>1</sup> Compare "Taming of the Shrew," ii 1 — *Halliwell*

That oft he comes forth as drunk as a mouse  
With a nose of his own not greatly pale,  
And this is not once, but every day  
Almost, of my faith, throughout the whole year  
That he these tricks doth use to play,  
Without all shame, dread and fear  
He knoweth himself, that yesternight  
The said young gentleman came to me,  
And then desired that he might  
This morning betimes married be,  
But now I doubt it will be high noon,  
Ere that his business be quite ended,  
Unless the knavish fool come very soon,  
That this same thing may be despatched,  
And therefore, since that this naughty pack  
Hath at this present me thus served,  
He is like henceforward my good-will to lack,  
Or else unwise I might be judged  
I am taught hereafter how such a one to trust  
In any matter concerning the church,  
For, if I should, I perceive that I must  
Of mine own honesty lose very much  
And yet for all this, from week to week,  
For his stipend and wages he ever<sup>1</sup> crieth,  
And for the same continually doth seek,  
As from time to time plainly appeareth,  
But whether his wages he hath deserved,  
Unto you all I do me report,  
Since that his duty he hath not fulfilled,  
Nor to the church will scant resort,  
That many a time and oft<sup>2</sup> I am fain  
To play the priest, clerk, and all,  
Though thus to do it is great pain,  
And my reward but very small

---

<sup>1</sup> *Never* in the original copy — *Hallwell*

<sup>2</sup> Compare "The Merchant of Venice," 1 3 — *Hallwell*

Wherefore (God willing) I will such order take,  
Before that I be many days elder,  
That he shall be glad this town to forsake,  
And learn evermore to please his better,  
And in such wise all they shall be used,  
Which in this parish intend to be clerks,  
Great pity it were the church should be dis-  
ordered,

Because that such swillbowls<sup>1</sup> do not their works  
And to say truth, in many a place,  
And other great towns beside this same,  
The priests and parishioners be in the like case,  
Which to the churchwardens may be a shame  
How should the priest his office fulfil,  
Accordingly as indeed he ought,  
When that the clerk will have a self-will,  
And always in service-time must be sought ?  
Notwithstanding at this present there is no re-  
medy,

But to take time, as it doth fall,  
Wherefore I will go hence and make me ready,  
For it helpeth not to chafe or brawl

*[Here the Priest goeth out, and in cometh the  
Rich Man]*

#### THE RICH MAN

Coming this day forth of my chamber,  
Even as for water to wash I did call,  
By chance I espied a certain stranger,  
Standing beneath within my hall,  
Who in very deed came from the innholder,  
Whereas for a time my son did lie,  
And said that his master had sent me a letter,  
And bad him to bring it with all speed possible,

---

<sup>1</sup> Drunkards

Wherein he did write that as this day  
That unthrift,<sup>1</sup> my son, to a certain maid  
Should then be wedded without further delay,  
And hath borrowed more than will be paid,  
And since that he heard he was my son  
By a gentleman or two this other day,  
He thought that it should be very well done  
To let me have knowledge thereof by the way,  
And willed me, if that I would any thing  
Of him to be done of me in this matter,  
That then he his servant such word should bring,  
As at his coming he might do hereafter  
I bad him thank his master most heartily,  
And sent him by him a piece of venison,  
For that he vouchsafed to write so gently,  
Touching the marrying and state of my son  
But notwithstanding I sent him no money  
To pay such debts as my son did owe,  
Because he had me forsaken utterly,  
And me for his good father would not know,  
And said that with him I would not make  
From that day forward during my life,  
But as he had brewed, that so he should bake,  
Since of his own choosing he gat him a wife  
Thus, when his servant from me departed,  
Into my chamber I went again,  
And there a great while I bitterly weeped  
This news to me was so great pain  
And thus with these words I began to moan,  
Lamenting and mourning myself all alone  
O madness, O doting of those young folk!  
O minds without wit, advice and discretion,  
With whom their parents can bear no stroke  
In their first matrimonial conjunction  
They know not what misery, grief and unquietness

---

<sup>1</sup> "Upstart unthrifths" (*Richard II*)—Halliwell

Will hereafter ensue of their extreme foolishness ,  
Of all such labours they be clean ignorant,  
Which, in the nourishing and keeping of children,  
To their great charges it is convenient  
Either of them henceforth to sustan  
Concerning expenses bestowed in a house,  
They perceive as little as doth the mouse  
On the one side the wife will brawl and scold,  
On the other side the infant will cry in the cradle  
Anon, when the child waxeth somewhat old,  
For meat and drink he begins to babble  
Hereupon cometh it that at markets and fairs  
A husband is forced to buy many wares  
Yet for all this hath my foolish son,  
As wise [as] a woodcock,<sup>1</sup> without any wit,  
Despising his father's mind and opinion,  
Married a wife for him most unfit,  
Supposing that mirth to be everlasting,  
Which then at the first was greatly pleasing  
How they two will live, I cannot tell,  
Whereto they may trust, they have nothing  
My mind giveth me, that they will come dwell  
At length by their father for want of living,  
But my son doubtless, for anything that I know,  
Shall reap in such wise as he did sow ,  
True he shall find, that Hipponax did write,  
Who said with a wife are two days of pleasure ,  
The first is the joy of the marriage-day and night,  
The second to be at the wife's sepulture  
And this by experience he shall prove true,  
That of his bridal great evils do ensue  
And (as I suppose) it will prove in his life,  
When he shall wish that to him it may chance,  
Which unto Eupolis and also his wife,

---

<sup>1</sup> Compare "Taming of the Shrew," 1 2 "O this wood  
cock what an ass it is!"—*Hallwell*



The night they were wedded, fell for a vengeance ,  
 Who with the heavy ruin of the bed were slam,  
 As the Poet Ovid in these two verses make plain

*Sit tibi conjugii nox prima novissimi vitor,  
 Eupolis hoc perit et nova nupta modo*

Ovidius, writing against one Ibis his enemy,  
 That the first night of his marriage did wish  
 The last of his life might be certainly,  
 For so (quoth he) did Eupolis and his wife perish  
 Yet to my son I pray God to send,  
 Because thereunto me nature doth bind,  
 Though he hath offended, a better end  
 Than Eupolis and his wife did find  
 And now I shall long ever anon,  
 Till some of those quarters come riding hither,  
 Unto the which my son is gone,  
 To know how they do live together  
 But I am fasting, and it is almost noon,  
 And more than time that I had dined  
 Wherefore from hence I will go soon ,  
 I think by this time my meat is burned

*[Here the Rich Man goeth out, and in cometh the  
 Young Man his son with the Young Woman, being  
 both married]*

#### THE HUSBAND

O my sweet wife, my pretty coney !

#### THE WIFE

O my husband, as pleasant as honey  
 HUSBAND O Lord, what pleasures and great  
 commodity  
 Are heaped together in matrimony !  
 WIFE How vehement, how strong a thing  
 love is !

How many smirks and dulsome<sup>1</sup> kisses !

HUSBAND What smiling, what laughing !  
What spoit, pastime, and playing !

WIFE What tickling, what toying !  
What dallying, what joying !

HUSBAND The man with the wife is wholly delighted,  
And with many causes to laughter enforced

WIFE When they two drink, they drink together,  
They never eat but one with another

HUSBAND Sometimes to their garden forth they walk,  
And into the fields sometimes they go,  
With merry tricks and gestures they talk,  
As they do move their feet to and fro

WIFE Sometimes they ride into the country,  
Passing the time with mirth and sport,  
And when with their friends they have been merry,  
Home to their own house they do resort

HUSBAND Sometimes abroad they go to see plays,  
And other trim sights for to behold  
When often they meet in the highways  
Much of their acquaintance they knew of old

WIFE Sometimes to the church they do repair,  
To hear the sermon that shall be made,  
Though it to remember they shall have small care,  
For why they be now but few of that trade

HUSBAND Sometimes at home at cards they play,  
Sometimes at this game, sometimes at that,  
They need not with sadness to pass the day,  
Nor yet to sit still, or stand in one plat

WIFE And as for us wives, occasions do move

---

<sup>1</sup> [Rather, perhaps, *dulsum*, i e, sweet ]

Sometimes with our gossips to make good cheer,  
Or else we did not, as did us behove,  
For certain days and weeks in the year

HUSBAND I think that a man might spend a  
whole day,

Declaring the joys and endless bliss,  
Which married persons receive alway,  
If they love faithfully, as meet it is

WIFE Wives cannot choose but love earnestly,  
If that their husbands do all things well,  
Or else, my sweetheart, we shall espy,  
That in quietness they cannot dwell

HUSBAND If they do not, it may be a shame  
For I love you heartily, I you assure  
Or else I were truly greatly to blame,  
Ye are so loving, so kind and demure

WIFE I trust that with neither hand or foot  
Ye shall see any occasion by me  
But that I love you even from the heart-root,  
And during my life so intend to be

HUSBAND Who then merry marriage can dis-  
commend,  
And will not with Aristotle in his *Ethics*<sup>1</sup> agree?  
But will say, that misery is the end,  
When otherwise I find it to be  
A politic man will marry a wife,  
As the philosopher makes declaration,  
Not only to have children by his life,  
But also for living, help, and sustentation

WIFE Who will not with H'eroacles plainly con-  
fess,  
That mankind to society is wholly adjoining,

---

<sup>1</sup> This confirms in some measure a reading in the  
"Taming of the Shrew"—"Or so devote to Aristotle's  
*Ethics*"—*Hallwell* [See Dyce's 2d edit in 114, and the  
note ]

And in this society nevertheless  
Of worthy wedlock took the beginning  
Without the which no city can stand,  
Nor household be perfect in any land ?

HUSBAND Pythagoras, Sociates, and Crates also  
Which truly were men of very small substance,  
As I heard my father tell long ago,  
Did take them wives with a safe conscience,  
And dwelled together, supposing that they  
Weie unto philosophy nother stop nor stay

WIFE Yea, what can be more according to kind  
Than a man to a woman himself to bind ?

HUSBAND Away with those therefore, that marriage despise,  
And of dangers thereof invent many lies !

WIFE But what is he that cometh yonder ?  
Do ye not think it is our man ?  
Somewhat there is that he hasteth hither,  
For he makes as much speed as he can

*[Here the servant of the Rich Man's Son  
cometh in, with an errand to his master]*

#### SERVANT

Master, there is a stranger at home,  
He would very fain with you talk  
For until that to him ye do come,  
Forth of the doois he will not walk

HUSBAND Come on then, my wife, if it be so,  
Let us depart hence for a season  
For I am not well, till I do know  
Of that man's coming the very reason

*[Here they both go out, and their Servant doth  
tarry behind alone]*

## SERVANT

Let them go both, and do what they will,  
 And with communication fill their belly  
 For I, by Saint George, will tarry here still,  
 In all my life I was never so weary<sup>1</sup>  
 I have this day filled so many pots  
 With all manner wine, ale, and beer,  
 That I wished then bellies full of bots,<sup>1</sup>  
 Long of whom<sup>2</sup> was made such cheer  
 What kinds of meat, both flesh and fish,  
 Have I, poor knave, to the table carried  
 From time to time, dish after dish,  
 My legs from going never ceased<sup>1</sup>  
 What running had I for apples and nuts<sup>1</sup>  
 What calling for biscuits, comfits, and caraways,<sup>3</sup>  
 A vengeance, said I, light on their guts,  
 That makes me to turn so many ways<sup>1</sup>  
 What crying was there for cards and dice<sup>1</sup>  
 What roisting,<sup>4</sup> what ruffling made they within<sup>1</sup>  
 I counted them all not greatly wise,  
 For my head did almost ache with din  
 What babbling, what jangling<sup>5</sup> was in the house<sup>1</sup>  
 What quaffing, what bibbing with many a cup<sup>1</sup>  
 That some lay along as drunk as a mouse,  
 Not able so much as their heads to hold up<sup>1</sup>  
 What dancing, what leaping, what jumping about,  
 From bench to bench, and stool to stool,  
 That I wondered their brains did not fall out,

---

<sup>1</sup> "Begnaw with the bots" (*Taming of the Shrew*) — *Hallwell*

<sup>2</sup> Owing to whom

<sup>3</sup> Caraway comfits See "2 Henry IV" and the blunders of the commentators corrected in my "Dictionary of Archaisms," p 231 — *Hallwell*

<sup>4</sup> Compare "Troilus and Cressida," II 2 — *Hallwell*

<sup>5</sup> "Good wits will be jangling" (*Love's Labour's Lost*) — *Hallwell*

When they so outrageously played the fool !  
 What juggling was there upon the boards !  
 What thrusting of knives through many a nose !  
 What bearing of forms, what holding of swords,  
 And putting of botkins<sup>1</sup> through leg and hose !  
 Yet for all that they called for drink,  
 And said they could not play for dry,  
 That many at me did nod and wink,  
 Because I should bring it by and by  
 Howsoever they sported, the pot did still walk  
 If that were away, then all was lost,  
 For ever anon the jug was their talk,  
 They passed<sup>2</sup> not who bare such charge and cost  
 Therefore let him look his purse be right good,  
 That it may discharge all that is spent,  
 Or else it will make his hair grow through his hood,<sup>3</sup>  
 There was such havoc made at this present,  
 But I am afeard my master be angry,  
 That I did abide thus long behind  
 Yet for his anger I pass<sup>4</sup> not greatly,  
 His words they be but only wind !  
 Now that I have rested so long in this place,  
 Homeward again I will hie me apace

*[Here the Servant goeth out, and in cometh  
 first the Wife, and shortly after the  
 Husband]*

#### THE WIFE

Where is my husband ? was he not here ?  
 I marvel much whither he is gone !  
 Then I perceive I am [not] much the near<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A dagger See "Hamlet," iii 1—*Hallwell*

<sup>2</sup> Cared

<sup>3</sup> [A rather common phrase See Hazlitt's "Proverbs," 1869, p 205]

<sup>4</sup> Care

<sup>5</sup> [Nearer]

But lo, where he cometh hither alone !  
Wot ye what, husband, from day to day  
With dainty dishes our bodies have been filled ?  
What meat to-morrow next shall we assay,  
Whereby we may then be both refreshed ?

HUSBAND Do ye now provide and give a regard  
For victuals hereafter to be prepared ?

WIFE But that I know, husband, it lieth us in  
hand

Of things to come to have a consideration,  
I would not once will you to understand  
About such business my careful provision  
It is needful therefore to work we make haste,  
That to get both our livings we may know the cast

HUSBAND To trouble me now, and make me  
vexed,

This mischievous means hast thou invented

WIFE What trouble for thee, what kind of  
vexation,

Have I to disquiet thee caused at this present ?

My only mind is thou make expedition

To seek for our profit, as is convenient <sup>1</sup>

Wherefore to thee I say once again,

Because to take pains thou art so loth,

By Christ, it were best with might and main

To fall to some work, I swear a great oath !

HUSBAND Yet, for a time, if it may thee please,  
Let me be quiet, and take mine ease

WIFE Wilt thou have us then through hunger  
be starved ?

HUSBAND I would not we should for hunger be  
killed

WIFE Then, I say then, this gear <sup>2</sup> go about,  
And look that thou labour diligently,  
Or else thou shalt shortly prove without doubt,

---

<sup>1</sup> Necessary, fit

<sup>2</sup> Business

Thy sluggishness will not please me greatly

HUSBAND Beginnest thou even now to be painful  
and grievous,

And to thy husband a woman so troublous?

WIFE What words have we here, thou misbegotten

Is there not already enough to be spoken?

HUSBAND O mirth, O joy, O pastime and  
pleasure,

How little a space do you endure!

WIFE I see my commandment can take no  
place,

Thou shalt aby therefore, I swear by the mass!

*[Here the Wife must strike her Husband  
handsomely about the shoulders with  
something]*

HUSBAND Alas, good wife! good wife, alas,  
alas!

Strike not so hard, I pray thee heartily!

Whatsoever thou wilt have brought to pass,

It shall be done with all speed possible

WIFE Lay these faggots, man, upon thy  
shoulder,

And carry this wood from street to street,

To sell the same, that we both together

Our living may get, as is most meet

Hence, rascal, hence without more delay!

What meanest thou thus to stagger and stay?

HUSBAND O Lord! what, how miserable men  
be those,

Which to their wives as wretches be wedded,

And have them continually their mortal foes,

Serving them thus, as slaves that be hired!

Now by experience true I do find,

Which oftentimes unto me heretofore

My father did say, declaring his mind,

That in matrimony was pain evermore,



What shall I do, most pitiful creature ?  
 Just cause I have, alas, to lament  
 That frantic woman my death will procure,  
 If so be this day without gain be spent  
 For unless for my wood some money be taken,  
 Like a dog with a cudgel I shall be beaten !  
 Ho, thou good fellow, which standest so nigh,  
 Of these heavy bundles ease my sore back,  
 And somewhat therefore give me by and by,  
 Or else I die, for silver I do lack  
 Now that I have some money received  
 For this my burthen, home I will go,  
 And lest that my wife be discontented,  
 What I have take, I will her show  
 Wife, I am come I went a long way,  
 And here is the profit and gains of this day !  
 WIFE Why, thou lout, thou fool, thou whore-  
     son folt,<sup>1</sup>  
 Is this thy wood money, thou peevish<sup>2</sup> dolt ?  
 Thou shalt smart for this gear, I make God a vow !  
 Thou knowest no more to sell wood than doth the  
     sow !  
 HUSBAND By God's precious, I will not un-  
     wisely suffer  
 To do as I have done any longer  
 WIFE Why, dost thou rise against me, villain ?  
 Take heed I scratch not out thy eyes twain !  
 HUSBAND Scratch, and thou dare, for I have a  
     knife  
 Perchance I will rid thee of thy life !  
 WIFE Slay me with thy knife, thou shitten  
     dastard !  
 Dost thou think to find me such a dissard ?

<sup>1</sup> Fool "Folte, stolidus" (*Vocab MS*)—*Halliwel*

<sup>2</sup> Foolish—"Our peevish opposition" (*Hamlet*)—*Halliwel*.

By Cock's bones, I will make thy skin to rattle,  
And the brains in thy skull more deeply to settle  
[*Here the Wife must lay on load upon her  
Husband*

HUSBAND Good wife, be content ! forgive me  
this fault !

I will never again do that which is naught

WIFE Go to, foolish calf, go to, and uprise,  
And put up thy knife, I thee advise

HUSBAND I will do your commandments what  
soever

WIFE Hence away, then, and fill this with  
water

HUSBAND O merciful God, in what lamentable  
state

Is he, of whom the wife is the master ?

Would God I had been predestinate

On my marriage day to have died with a fever !

O wretched creature, what may I do ?

My grievous wife shall I return unto ?

Lo, wife, behold ! without further delay

The water ye sent for here I do bring

WIFE What, I say ? what meaneth this weeping ?  
What aileth thee to make all this crying ?

HUSBAND I weep not, forsooth, nor cry not as  
yet

WIFE No, nor thou wilt not, if thou hast any  
wit,

It is not thy weeping that can ought avail,

And therefore this matter no longer bewail

Come off, I say, and run by the river,

And wash these clothes in the water

HUSBAND Wife, I will thither hie me fast

WIFE Yet I advise thee, thou cullon,<sup>1</sup> make  
haste

---

<sup>1</sup> Compare "Taming of the Shrew," iv 2 — *Hallwell*

HUSBAND O, how unhappy and eke unfortunate  
 Is the most part of married men's condition !  
 I would to death I had been agate,<sup>1</sup>  
 When my mother in bearing me made lamentation  
 What shall I do ? whither shall I turn ?  
 Most careful man now under the sky !  
 In the flaming fire I had rather burn,  
 Than with extreme pain live so heavily  
 There is no shift, to my wife I must go,  
 Whom that I did wed, I am full wo !  
 Where are ye, wife ? your clothes are washed clean,  
 As white as a lily,<sup>2</sup> without spot or stain

WIFE Thou thief, thou carter, why is not this  
 place  
 Washed as fair as all the rest ?  
 Thou shalt for this gear now smoke apace !  
 By Jis,<sup>3</sup> I swear, thou brutish beast !

*[Here she must knock her Husband*

HUSBAND. Alas, alas ! I am almost quite dead !  
 My wife so pitifully hath broken my head !

*[Here her Husband must lie along on the ground,  
 as though he were sore beaten and wounded*

WIFE Well, I perceive the time will away,  
 And into the country to go I have promised,  
 Look therefore thou go not from hence to-day,  
 Till home again I am returned  
 Take heed, I say, this house thee retain,  
 And stir not for any thing out of my door,  
 Until that I come hither again,  
 As thou wilt be rewarded therefore

*[Here his Wife goeth out, and the Husband  
 tarrieth behind alone*

<sup>1</sup> [A-going, bound]

<sup>2</sup> A common phrase See "Two Gentlemen of Verona,"

<sup>11</sup> <sup>3</sup> —Halliwell

<sup>3</sup> Compare the song in "Hamlet," iv 5 —Halliwell

HUSBAND The flying fiend<sup>1</sup> go with my wife,  
 And in her journey ill may she speed !  
 I pray God Almighty to shorten her life !  
 The earth at no time doth bear such a weed !  
 Although that I be a gentleman born,  
 And come by my ancetors of a good blood,  
 Yet am I like to wear a coat toin,  
 And hither and thither go carry wood !  
 But rather than I this life will abide,  
 To-morrow morning I do intend  
 Home to my father again to ride,  
 If some man to me his horse will lend  
 She is to her gossips gone to make merry,  
 And there she will be for three or four days  
 She cares not, though I do now miscarry,  
 And suffer such pain and sorrow always  
 She leaveth to me neither bread nor drink,  
 But such, as I judge, no body would eat  
 I might by the walls lie dead and stink,  
 For any great wholesomeness in my meat  
 She walketh abroad, and taketh her pleasure  
 Herself to cherish is all her care  
 She passeth not what grief I endure,  
 Or how I can live with noughty<sup>2</sup> fare  
 And since it is so, without further delay  
 To my father to-morrow I will away  
 [*Here he goeth out, and in cometh the Devil* °

## SATAN THE DEVIL

Ho, ho, ho, what a fellow am I !  
 Give room, I say, both more and less

<sup>1</sup> [ Orig has *flying and fiend* ]

<sup>2</sup> Bad "This is a noughty night" (*Lear*) — *Hallwell*

<sup>3</sup> The devil was generally attended by the Vice, but he is here introduced by himself, and the exact meaning of his part in this plot is somewhat a mystery — *Hallwell*

My strength and power, hence to the sky,  
No earthly tongue can well express !  
O, what inventions, crafts and wiles  
Is there contained within this head !  
I know that he is within few miles,  
Which of the same is throughly sped  
O, it was all my study day and night  
Cunningly to bring this matter to pass  
In all the earth there is no wight,  
But I can make to cry alas  
This man and wife, that not long ago  
Fell in this place together by the ears  
It was only I that this strife did sow,  
And have been about it certain years  
For after that I had taken a smell  
Of their good will and fervent love,  
Me-thought I should not tarry in hell,  
But unto debate them shortly move  
O, it was I that made him to despise  
All wisdom, goodness, virtue, and learning,  
That he afterward could in no wise  
Once in his heart fancy teaching  
O, it was I that made him refuse  
The wholesome monition of his father dear,  
And caused him still of a wife to muse,  
As though she should be his joy and cheer !  
O, it was I that made him go hence,  
And suppose that his father was very unkind ,  
It was I that did drive him to such expense  
And made him as bare as an ape is behind  
And now that I have this business ended,  
And joined him and his wife together,  
I think that I have my part well played  
None of you all would do it better  
Ho, ho, ho ! this well-favoured head of mine,  
What thing soever it hath in hand,  
Is never troubled with ale or wine,

Neither by sea, nor yet by land  
I tell you I am a marvellous body,  
As any is at this day living  
My head doth devise each thing so trimly,  
That all men may wonder of the ending  
O, I have such fetches,<sup>1</sup> such toys in this head,  
Such crafty devices and subtle train,  
That whomsoever of you I do wed,  
Ye are like at my hands to take small gain  
There is no gentleman, knight, or lord  
There is no duke, earl, or king,  
But, if I list, I can with one word  
Shortly send unto their lodging  
Some I disquiet with covetousness  
Some with wrath, pride and lechery,  
And some I do thrust into such distress,  
That he feeleth only pain and misery  
Some I allure to have then delight  
Always in gluttony, envy and murder,  
And those things to practise with all then might,  
Either by land or else by water  
Ho, ho, ho ! there is none to be compared  
To me, I tell you, in any point  
With a great sort<sup>2</sup> myself I have tried,  
That boldly ventured many a joint,  
And when for a long time we had wrestled,  
And showed our strength on either side,  
Yet oftentimes a fall they received,  
When through my policy their feet did slide  
Wherefore (my dear children) I warn ye all  
Take heed, take heed of my temptation,  
For commonly at the last ye have the fall,  
And also [be] brought to desperation  
O ! it is a folly for many to strive,  
And think of me to get the upper hand,

---

<sup>1</sup> Tricks See "King Lear"—*Hallwell*

<sup>2</sup> Company

For unless that God make them to thrive,  
They cannot against me stick or stand  
And though that God on high have his dominion,  
And ruleth the world everywhere,  
Yet by your leave I have a portion  
Of this same earth that standeth here  
The kingdom of God is above in heaven,  
And mine is, I tell you, beneath in hell,  
But yet a greater place, if he had dealt even,  
He should have given me and mine to dwell  
For to my palace of every nation,  
Of what degree or birth soever they be,  
Come running in with such festination,<sup>1</sup>  
That otherwhiles they amazed me  
O, all the Jews and all the Turks,  
Yea, and a great part of Christendom,  
When they have done my will and my works,  
In the end they fly hither all and some <sup>2</sup>  
There is no minute of the day,  
There is no minute of the night,  
But that in my palace there is alway  
Crowding together a marvellous sight,  
They come on thicker than swarms of bees,  
And make such a noise and crying out,  
That many a one lieth on his knees,  
With thousands kept under and closed about  
Not so much as my parlours, halls, and every  
chamber  
My porches, my galleries, and my court  
My entries, my kitchen, and my larder,  
But with all manner people be filled throughout  
What shall I say more, I cannot tell,  
But of this (my children) I am certain,  
There comes more in one hour unto hell,  
Than unto heaven in a month or twain  
And yet for all this my nature is such,

---

<sup>1</sup> Haste Lat<sup>2</sup> Every one

That I am not pleased with this company,  
But out of my kingdom I must walk much,  
That one or other I may take taidy  
Ho, ho, ho ! I am never once afraid  
With these my claws you for to touch,  
For I will not leave, till you be paid  
Such treasure as is within my pouch  
The world is my son, and I am his father,  
And also the flesh is a daughter of mine ,  
It is I alone that taught them to gather  
Both gold and silver that is so fine ,  
Wherefore I suppose that they love me well,  
And my commandments gladly obey,  
That at the last then unto hell  
They may come all the ready way  
But now (I know), since I came hither,  
There is such a multitude at my gate,  
That I must again repair down thither  
After mine old manner and rate

*[Here the Devil goeth out, and in cometh the Rich  
Man's Son alone]*

## THE SON

How glad am I that my journey is ended,  
Which I was about this whole day !  
My horse to stand still I never suffered,  
Because I would come to the end of my way  
But yet I am sorry that I cannot find  
My loving father at home at his place,  
That unto him I may break my mind,  
And let him know my miserable case

*[Here he confesseth his naughtiness, uttering the  
same with a pitiful voice]*

I have been wild, I have been wanton,  
I have ever followed my fancy and will  
I have been to my father a froward son,  
And from day to day continued still



I have always proudly disdained those  
That in my madness gave me good counsel  
I counted them most my mortal foes,  
And stoutly against them did rebel  
The thing that was good I greatly hated,  
As one which lacked both wit and reason,  
The thing that was evil I ever loved,  
Which now I see is my confusion  
I could not abide of the school to hear,  
Masters and teachers my heart abhorred,  
Methought the book was not fit gear  
For my tender fingers to have handled,  
I counted it a pleasure to be daintily fed,  
And to be clothed in costly array  
I would most commonly slug in my bed,  
Until it were very far-forth day  
And (to be short) anon after this,  
There came such fancies in my brain,  
That to have a wife, whom I might kiss,  
I reckoned to be the greatest gain  
But yet, alas, I was quite deceived,  
The thing itself doth easily appear,  
I would, alas, I had been buried,  
When to my father I gave not ear!  
That which I had I have clean spent,  
And kept so much riot with the same,  
That now I am fain a coat that is rent,  
Alas, to wear for very shame  
I have not a cross left in my purse  
To help myself now in my need,  
That well I am worthy of God's curse,  
And of my father to have small meed

[*Here the Rich Man must be as it were coming in*  
But except mine eyes do me beguile,  
That man is my father, whom I do see  
And now that he comes, without craft or wile,  
To him I will bend on either knee  
Ah, father, father, my father most dear!

FATHER Ah ! mine own child, with thee what  
cheer ?

SON All such sayings as in my mind  
At the first time ye studied to settle,  
Most true, alas, I do them find,  
As though they were written in the Gospel

FATHER Those words, my son, I have almost  
forgotten,  
Stand up, therefore, and kneel no longer,  
And what it was I spake so often,  
At two or three words recite to thy father

SON If that ye be, father, well remembered,  
As the same I believe ye cannot forget,  
You said that, so soon as I were married,  
Much pain and trouble thereby I should get

FATHER Hast thou by proof, son, this thing  
tried ?

SON Yea, alas, too much I have experienced  
My wife I did wed all full of fienzy  
My seely poor shouldeis hath now so bruised,  
That like to a cripple I move me weakly,  
Being full often with the staff thwacked  
She spareth no more my flesh and bone,  
Than if my body were made of stone !  
Her will, her mind, and her commandment  
From that day hither I have fulfilled,  
Which if I did not, I was bitterly shent,  
And with many strokes grievously punished  
That would God, the hou when I was married,  
In the midst of the church I might have sunk  
I think there is no man under the sun,  
That here on the earth beareth life,  
Which would do such drudgery as I have done,  
At the unkind words of such a wife,  
For how I was used, and in what wise,  
A day to declare will not suffice  
If this be not true, as I have spoken,  
To my good neighbours I me report,

Who other whiles, when I was smitten,  
My wife to be gentle did then exhort  
For glad I was to abide all labour,  
Whereby the less might be my dolour<sup>1</sup>  
Wherefore, good father, I you humbly desire  
To have pity of me and some compassion,  
Or else I am like to lie fast in the mine,  
Without any succour or consolation  
For at this hour I have not a penny,  
Myself to help in this great misery

FATHER For so much as by my advice and  
counsel

In no manner wise thou wouldest be ruled  
Therefore to thee I cannot do well,  
But let thee still suffer as thou hast deserved,  
For that thou hast suffered is yet nothing  
To that tribulation which is behind coming

SON Alas, father, what shall I do?  
My wits of themselves cannot devise  
What thing I were best go unto,  
Whereof an honest living may arise  
Wherefore, gentle father, in this distress,  
Somewhat assuage mine heaviness

FATHER What should I do, I cannot tell,  
For now that thou hast taken a wife,  
With me thy father thou mayest not dwell,  
But always with her spend thy life  
Thou mayest not again thy wife forsake,  
Which during life to thee thou didst take

SON Alas, I am not able thus to endure,  
Though thereunto I were never so willing,  
For my wife is of such a crooked nature,  
As no woman else in this day living,  
And if the very truth I shall confess,  
She is to me an evil that is endless

---

<sup>1</sup> Grief “My endless dolour” (*Two Gentlemen of Verona*)  
—Halliwell

FATHER If that thou thinkest thyself alone  
Only to lead this irksome life,  
Thou may'st learn what grief, sorrow and moan,  
Socrates had with Xantippe his wife<sup>1</sup>,  
Her husband full oft she taunted and checked,  
And, as the book saith, dishonestly mocked

SON I cannot tell what was Socrates wife,  
But mine I do know, alas, too well,  
She is one that is evermore full of strife,  
And of all scolders beareth the bell  
When she speaketh best, then brawleth her tongue,  
When she is still, she fighteth apace,  
She is an old witch, though she be young  
No mirth with her, no joy or solace!

FATHER I cannot, my son, thy state redress,  
Me thy father thou didst refuse,  
Wherefore now help thy own foolishness,  
And of thy wife no longer muse

SON My wife went forth into the country  
With certain gossips to make good cheer,  
And bad me at home still to be,  
That at her return she might find me there  
And if that she do take me from home,<sup>2</sup>  
My bones, alas, she will make to crackle,  
And me her husband, as a stark mome,<sup>3</sup>  
With knocking and mocking she will handle,  
And, therefore, if I may not here remain,  
Yet, loving father, give me your reward,  
That I may with speed ride home again,  
That to my wife's words have some regard.

FATHER If that at the first thou wouldest have  
been ordered,  
And done as thy father counselled thee,  
So wretched a life had never chanced,

---

<sup>1</sup> Compare "Taming of the Shrew," 1. 2 — *Hallwell*

<sup>2</sup> [Catch me gone from home]

<sup>3</sup> Fool — See "Comedy of Errors, III. 1." — *Hallwell*

Whereof at this present thou complainest to me,  
But yet come on, to my house we will be going,  
And there thou shalt see what I will give —  
A little to help thy need living,  
Since that in such penury thou dost live,  
And that once done, thou must hence again,  
For I am not he that will thee retain

[*Here the Rich Man and his Son go out, and in  
cometh the Perorator*<sup>1</sup>

#### THE PERORATOR

This Interlude here, good gentle audience,  
Which presently before you we have played,  
Was set forth with such care and diligence,  
As by us truly might well be shewed  
Short it is, I deny not, and full of brevity,  
But if ye mark thereof the matter,  
Then choose ye cannot but see plainly,  
How pain and pleasure be knit together  
By this little play the father is taught  
After what manner his child to use,  
Lest that through cockering<sup>2</sup> at length he be  
brought

His father's commandment to refuse,  
Here he may learn a witty<sup>3</sup> lesson  
Betimes to correct his son being tender,  
And not let him be lost and undone  
With wantonness, of mischief the mother,  
For as long as the twig is gentle and pliant  
(Every man knoweth this by experience),  
With small force and strength it may be bent,  
Putting thereto but little diligence,  
But after that it waxeth somewhat bigger,  
And to cast his branches largely beginneth,

---

<sup>1</sup> The person who spoke the Epilogue (Lat)

<sup>2</sup> Indulgence

<sup>3</sup> Clever — See "Taming of the Shrew" — *Hallswell*

It is scant the might of all thy power,  
That one bough thereof easily bendeth  
This twig to a child may well be appld,  
Which, in his childhood and age of infancy,  
With small correction may be amended,  
Embracing the school with heart and body,  
Who afterward, with overmuch liberty,  
And ranging abroad with the bridle of will,  
Despiseth all virtue, learning, and honesty,  
And also his father's mind to fulfil  
Whereby at the length it so falleth out  
That this the young stripling, after that day  
Runs into confusion without any doubt,  
And like for evermore quite to decay  
Wherefore take heed, all ye that be parents,  
And follow a part after my counsel,  
Instruct your children and make them students,  
That unto all goodness they do not rebel,  
Remember what writeth Solomon the wise  
*Qui parcat in gæ, odit filium*  
Therefore for as much as ye can devise,  
Spare not the rod, but follow wisdom  
Further, ye young men and children also,  
Listen to me and hearken a while,  
What in few words for you I will show  
Without any flattery, fraud, or guile  
This rich man's son whom we did set forth  
Here evidently before our eyes,  
Was (as it chanced) nothing worth  
Given to all noughtiness, vice, and lies  
The cause whereof was this for a truth  
His time full idly he did spend,  
And would not study in his youth,  
Which might have brought him to a good end,  
His father's commandment he would not obey,  
But wantonly followed his fantasy,  
For nothing that he could do or say  
Would bring this child to honesty

And at the last (as here ye might see)  
Upon a wife he fixed his mind,  
Thinking the same to be felicity,  
When indeed misery came behind,  
For by this wife he carefully<sup>1</sup> lived,  
Who under his father did want nothing,  
And in such sort was hereby tormented,  
That ever anon he went lamenting  
His father did will him lightness<sup>2</sup> to leave,  
And only to give himself unto study,  
But yet unto virtue he would not cleave,  
Which is commodious for soul and body  
You heard that by sentences ancient and old,  
He stirred his son as he best thought,  
But he, as an unthrift stout and bold  
His wholesome counsel did set at nought,  
And since that he despised his father,  
God unto him did suddenly then send  
Such poverty with a wife and grief together,  
That shame and sorrow was his end.  
Wherefore to conclude, I warn you all  
By your loving parents always be ruled,  
Or else be well assured of such a fall,  
As unto this young man worthily chanced  
Worship God daily, which is the chief thing,  
And his holy laws do not offend  
Look that ye truly serve the king,  
And all your faults be glad to amend  
Moreover, be true of hand and tongue,  
And learn to do all things that be honest,  
For no time so fit, as when ye be young,  
Because that age only is the aptest  
I have no more to speak at this season,  
For very good will these things I did say,

---

<sup>1</sup> With care or sorrow

<sup>2</sup> Levity—Cf “Taming of Shrew,” iv 2—*Hallwell*

Because I do see that virtue is reason<sup>1</sup>  
With most men and children at this day  
[*Here the rest of the Players come in, and  
kneel down all together, each of them  
saying one of these verses*

And last of all to make an end,  
O God, to thee we most humbly pray  
That to Queen Elizabeth thou do send  
Thy lively path and perfect way<sup>1</sup>  
Grant her in health to reign  
With us many years most prosperously,  
And after this life for to attain  
The eternal bliss, joy, and felicity<sup>1</sup>  
Our bishops, pastors, and ministers also,  
The true understanding of thy word,  
Both night and day, now mercifully show,  
That their life and preaching may godly accord  
The lords of the council and the nobility,  
Most heavenly father, we thee desire  
With grace, wisdom, and godly policy  
Their hearts and minds always inspire.  
And that we thy people, duly considering  
The power of our queen and great auctority,  
May please thee and serve her without feigning,  
Living in peace, rest, and tranquillity

### GOD SAVE THE QUEEN

#### A SONG

*Why doth the world study vain glory to attain,  
The prosperity whereof is short and transitory,  
Whose mighty power doth fall down again,  
Like earthen pots, that breaketh suddenly?  
Believe rather words that be written in ice,  
Than the wretched world with his subtlety,*

---

<sup>1</sup> Scalce



*Deceitful in gifts, men only to entice,  
Destitute of all sure credence and fidelity  
Give credit more to men of true judgments  
Than to the worldly renown and joys,  
Replenished with dreams and vain intents,  
Abounding in riched and naughty toys  
Where is now Salomon, in wisdom so excellent?  
Where is now Samson, in battle so strong?  
Where is now Absalom, in beauty resplendent?  
Where is now good Jonathas, hid so long?  
Where is now Cesar, in victory triumphing?  
Where is now Dives, in dishes so dainty?  
Where is now Tully, in eloquence exceeding?  
Where is now Aristotle, learned so deeply?  
What emperors, kings, and dukes in times past,  
What earls and lords, and captains of war,  
What popes and bishops, all at the last  
In the twinkling of an eye are fled so far?  
How short a feast is this worldly joying?  
Even as a shadow it passeth away,  
Depriving a man of gifts everlasting,  
Leading to darkness and not to day!  
O meat of worms, O heap of dust,  
O like to dew, climb not too high!  
To live to-morrow thou canst not trust,  
Therefore now betime help the needy  
The fleshly beauty, whereat thou dost wonder,  
In holy Scripture is likened to hay,  
And as a leaf in a stormy weather,  
So is man's life blownen clean away  
Call nothing thine that may be lost  
The world doth give and take again,  
But set thy mind on the Holy Ghost,  
Despise the world that is so vain!*

THE MARRIAGE  
OF  
WIT AND SCIENCE.

[The title of the old copy is *A new and Pleasaunt enterlude intituled the marriage of Witte and Science* Imprinted at London in Flete Streete, neare vnto saint Dunstones church by Thomas Marshe 4°, black letter

There is no date, but the size is a small 4to, and it probably appeared in 1570, having been licensed in 1569-70 to Maish. Some further particulars of the play, now first reprinted from the only known copy in the Malone collection at Oxford, may be found in Hazlitt's "Handbook," 1867, p. 465, Collier's "Extr from the Stat Reg," i. 204, and Collier's "Hist Engl Dram Poetry," ii. 341-7, where there is a somewhat long review of the piece, with extracts. Mr Collier, who bestows considerable praise on this interlude, observes — "The moral play of 'The Marriage of Wit and Science' contains a remarkable external feature not belonging to any other piece of this class that I remember to have met with. It is regularly divided into five acts, and each of the scenes is also marked." The anonymous author appears to have borrowed to some extent from the older performance by John Redford, printed from a MS by the Shakespeare Society in 1848, but the two productions must, nevertheless, be regarded as distinct and independent.]

## THE PLAYERS' NAMES

NATURE	SCIENCE	SHAME
WIT	REASON	IDLENESS
WILL	EXPERIENCE	IGNORANCE
STUDY	RECREATION	TEDIOUSNESS
DILIGENCE, <i>with three other women singers</i>	INSTRUCTION	



# THE MARRIAGE OF WIT AND SCIENCE



[ACT I]

NATURE, WIT, *and* WILL

GRAND lady, mother of every mortal thing  
Nurse of the world, conservative of kind  
Cause of increase, of life and soul the spring,  
At whose instinct the noble heaven doth wind,  
To whose award all creatures are assigned,  
I come in place to treat with this my son,  
For his avail how he the path may find,  
Whereby his race in honour he may run  
Come, tender child, unripe and green for age,  
In whom the parent sets her chief delight,  
Wit is thy name, but far from wisdom sage,  
Till tract of time shall work and frame aright,  
This peerless brain, not yet in perfect plight  
But when it shall be wrought, methinks I see,  
As in a glass beforehand with my sight,  
A certain perfect piece of work in thee,  
And now so far as I [can] guess by signs,  
Some great attempt is fixed in thy breast  
Speak on, my son, whereto thy heart inclines,  
And let me deal to set thy heart at rest  
He salves the sore, that knows the patient best  
As I do thee, my son, my chiefest care,  
In whom my special praise and joy doth rest,  
To me therefore these thoughts of thine declare

## WIL

Nature, my sovereign queen and parent passing dear,  
Whose force I am enforced to know and 'knowledge  
everywhere,  
This care of mine, though it be bred within my  
breast,  
Yet it is not so ripe as yet to breed me great  
unrest,  
So run I to and fro with hap luck as I find,  
Now fast, now loose now hot, now cold inconstant  
as the wind,  
I feel myself in love, yet not inflamed so,  
But causes move me now and then to let such  
fancies go,  
Which causes prevailing sets each thing else in doubt  
Much like the nail, that last came in, and drives  
the former out  
Wherefore my suit is this that it would please  
your grace  
To settle this unsettled head in some assured place  
To lead me through the thick, to guide me all the way,  
To point me where I may achieve my most desired  
pray,  
For now again of late I kindle in desire,  
And pleasure pricketh forth my youth to feel a  
greater fire,  
What though I be too young to show her sport in  
bed,  
Yet are there many in this land that at my years  
do wed,  
And though I wed not yet, yet am I old enow'  
To serve my lady to my power, and to begin to  
woo

## NATURE

What is that lady, son, which thus thy heart doth  
move ?

WIT

A lady, whom it might beseem high Jove himself  
to love

NATURE

Who taught thee her to love, or hast thou seen her  
face?

WIT

Nor this nor that, but I heard men talk of her  
apace

NATURE

What is her name?

WIT

Reason is her sire, Experience her dame,  
The lady now is in her flower, and Science is her  
name  
Lo, where she dwells, lo, where my heart is all  
possest,  
Lo, where my body would abide, lo, where my  
soul doth rest  
Her have I borne good-will these many years tofore,  
But now she lodgeth in my thought a hundred  
parts the more,  
And since I do persuade myself that this is she,  
Which ought above all earthly wights to be most  
dear to me,  
And since I wot not how to compass my desue,  
And since for shame I cannot now nor mind not to  
retire,  
Help on, I you beseech, and bring this thing about  
Without your hurt to my great ease, and set all  
out of doubt



## NATURE

Thou askest more than is in me to give,  
More than thy cause, more than thy state, will bear,  
They are two things to able thee to live,  
And to live so, that none should be thy peer,  
The first from me proceedeth everywhere,  
But this by toil and practice of the mind,  
Is set full far, God wot, and bought full dear,  
By those that seek the fruit thereof to find,  
To match thee then with Science in degree,  
To knit that knot that few may reach unto,  
I tell thee plain, it lieth not in me  
Why should I challenge that I cannot do?  
But thou must take another way to woo,  
And beat thy brain, and bend thy curious head,  
Both ride and run, and travel to and fro,  
If thou intend that famous dame to wed

## WIT

You name yourself the lady of this world

## NATURE

It is true

## WIT

And can there be within this world a thing too  
hard for you?

## NATURE

My power it is not absolute in jurisdiction,  
For I cognise another lord above,  
That hath received unto his disposition  
The soul of man, which he of special love  
To gifts of grace and learning eke doth move

A work so far beyond my reach and call,  
That into part of praise with him myself to show  
Might soon procure my well-deserved fall  
He makes the frame, and [I] receive it so,  
No jot therein altered for my head ,  
And as I it receive, I let it go,  
Causing therein such sparkles to be bred,  
As he commits to me, by whom I must be led  
Who guides me first, and in me guides the rest,  
All which in their due course and kind are spread  
Of gifts from me such as may serve them best,  
To thee, son Wit, he will'd me to inspire,  
The love of knowledge and certain seeds divine,  
Which ground might be a mean to bring thee here,  
If thereunto thyself thou wilt incline  
The massy gold the cunning hand makes fine  
Good grounds are till'd, as well as are the worst,  
The rankest flower will ask a spunging time ,  
So is man's wit unperfit at the first

## WIT

If cunning be the key and well of wordly<sup>1</sup> bliss  
Me-thinketh God might at the first as well endue  
all with this

## NATURE

As cunning is the key of bliss, so it is worthy praise  
The worthiest things are won with pain in tract of  
time always

## WIT

And yet right worthy things there are, you will  
confess, I trow,

---

<sup>1</sup> Worldly

Which notwithstanding at our birth God doth on  
us bestow

## NATURE

There are, but such as unto you, that have the great  
to name,  
I rather that bestow, than win thereby immortal  
fame

## WIT

Fain would I learn what harm or detriment ensued,  
If any man were at his birth with these good gifts  
endued

## NATURE

There should be nothing left, wherein men might  
excel,  
No blame for sin, no praise to them that had  
designed well  
Virtue should lose her price, and learning would  
abound,  
And as man would admire the thing, that each-  
where might be found  
The great [e]state, that have of me and fortune  
what they will,  
Should have no need to look to those, whose heads  
are fraught with skill  
The meaner sort, that now excels in virtues of the  
mind,  
Should not be once accepted there, where now they  
succour find  
For great men should be sped of all, and would  
have need of none,  
And he that were not born to land should lack to  
live upon  
These and five thousand causes mo, which I forbear  
to tell,

The noble virtue of the mind have caused there to dwell,  
Where none may have access, but such as can get in  
Through many double doors through heat, through  
cold, through thick and thin

## WIT

Suppose I would address myself to seek her out,  
And to refuse no pain that lieth thereabout ,  
Should I be sure to speed ?

## NATURE

Trust me, and have no doubt,  
Thou canst not choose but speed with travail and  
with time  
These two are they that must direct thee how to  
climb

## WIT

With travail and with time ? must they needs join  
in one ?

## NATURE

Nor that nor this can do thee good, if they be took  
alone

## WIT

Time worketh all with ease, and gives the greatest  
dint  
In him soft water drops can hollow hardest flint  
Again with labour by itself great matters com-  
pass'd be,  
Even at a gird, in very little time or none we see  
Wherefore in my conceit good reason it is,  
Either this without that to look, or that without  
this

## NATURE

Set case thou didst attempt to climb Parnassus  
hill  
Take time five hundred thousand years and longer,  
if thou will,  
Trowest thou to touch the top thereof by standing  
still ?  
Again work out thy heart, and spend thyself with  
toil  
Take time withal, or else I dare assure thee of the  
foil

## WIT

Madam, I trust I have your licence and your leave,  
With your good-will and so much help as you to  
me can give ,  
With further aid also, when you shall spy your  
time,  
To make a proof to give attempt this famous hill  
to climb ,  
And now I here request your blessing and your  
prayer ,  
For sure, before I sleep, I will to yonder fort  
repair

## NATURE

I bless thee here with all such gifts as nature can  
bestow,  
And for thy sake I would they were as many  
hundred mo  
Take there withal this child, to wait upon thee still  
A bird of mine, some kin to thee his name is Will

## WIT

Welcome to me, my Will, what service canst thou  
do ?

WILL

All things forsooth, sir, when me list, and more  
too

WIT

But whether<sup>1</sup> wilt thou list, when I shall list, I  
trow?

WILL

Trust not to that, peradventure yea, peradventure  
no

WIT

When I have need of thee, thou wilt not serve me  
so

WILL

If ye bid me run, perhaps I will go

WIT

Cock's soul, this is a boy for the nonce amongst  
twenty mo'

WILL

I am plain, I tell you, at a word and a blow

WIT

Then must I prick you, child, if you be drown'd in  
sloth

NATURE

Agree, you twain, for I must leave you both,  
Farewell, my son farewell, mine own good Will,  
Be ruled by Wit, and be obedient still,

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *when*

Force thee I cannot, but as far as lies in me,  
 I will help thy master to make a good servant of  
 thee  
 Farewell— [Exit

WIT

Adieu, lady mother, with thanks for all your pain,  
 And now let me bethink myself again and eke again,  
 To match with Science is the thing that I have took  
 in hand  
 A matter of more weight, I see, than I did under-  
 stand  
 Will must be won to this, or else it will be hard,  
 Will must go break the matter first, or else my  
 game<sup>1</sup> is marr'd,  
 Sh boy, are you content to take such part for me,  
 As God shall send, and help it forth as much as  
 lies in thee?

WILL

Yea, master, by his wounds, or else cut off his head

WIT

Come then, and let us two devise what trace were  
 best to tread,  
 Nature is on my side, and Will my boy is fast  
 There is no doubt I shall obtain my joys at last  
[Exeunt

## ACT II, SCÆNA 1

WIT and WILL

WIT

What, Will, I say, Will boy, come again, foolish elf!

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *gain*

WILL

I cry you mercy, sir, you are a tall man yourself

WIT

Such a crackbrain as thou art, I never saw the like  
to it

WILL

Truth, in respect of you, that are nothing else but  
Wit!

WIT

Canst thou tell me thy errand, because thou art  
gone so soon?

WILL

I can remember a long tale of a man in the moon,  
With such a circumstance and such flim-flam?  
I will tell, at a word, whose servant I am  
Wherefore I come, and what I have to say,  
And call for her answer, before I come away  
What, should I make a broad tree of every little  
shrub,  
And keep her a great while with a tale of a tub?

WIT

Yet thou must commend me to be rich, lusty,  
pleasant, and wise

WILL

I cannot commend you, but I must make twenty  
lies  
Rich, quoth you? that appeareth by the port that  
you keep  
Even as rich as a new-shorn sheep!



Of pleasant concerts, ten bushels to the peck,  
Lusty like a herring, with a bell about his neck,  
Wise as a woodcock as brag as a bodylouse,  
A man of your hands, to match with a mouse !  
How say you, are not these proper qualities to  
praise you with ?

## WIT

Leave these mad toys of thine, and come to the pith  
One part of the errand should have been  
To give her this picture of mine to be seen,  
And to request her the same to accept,  
Safely until my coming to be kept,  
Which I suspend till thy return, and then,  
If it like her ladyship to appoint me where and  
when,  
I will wait upon her gladly out of hand

## WILL

Sir, let me alone your mind I understand  
I will handle the matter, so that you shall owe me  
thanks,  
But what, if she find fault with these spindle-shanks,  
Or else with these black spots on your nose ?

## WIT

In faith, sir boy, this talk deserveth blows.

## WILL

You will not misuse your best servant, I suppose ?  
For, by his nails and by his fingers too,  
I will mai your marriage, if you do so <sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *clatter* (for *clatter*), which the compositor's eye must have caught from the next line So is agreeable to the metre and the sense

WIT

I pray thee go thy ways, and leave this clatter

WILL

First shall I be so bold to break to you a matter

WIT

Tush, thou art disposed to spend words in waste,  
And yet thou knowest this business asketh haste

WILL

But even two words, and then I am gone

WIT

If it be worth the hearing, say on

WILL

I would not have you think that I, for my part,  
From my promise or from your service will depart,  
But yet now and then it goeth to my heart,  
When I think how this marriage may be to my  
smart

WIT

Why so ?

WILL

I would tell you the cause, if I durst for shame

WIT

Speak hardly what thou wilt without any blame

## WILL

I am not disposed as yet to be tame,  
 And therefore I am loth to be under a dame,  
 Now you are a bachelor, a man may soon win you,  
 Me-thinks there is some good fellowship in you,  
 We may laugh and be merry at board and at bed,  
 You are not so testy as those that be wed  
 Mild in behaviour and loth to fall out,  
 You may run, you may ride and rove round about,  
 With wealth at your will and all thing at ease,  
 Free, frank and lusty easy to please  
 But when you be clogged and tied by the toe,  
 So fast that you shall not have pow'r to let go,  
 You will tell me another lesson soon after,  
 And cry *peccavi* too, except your luck be the better  
 Then farewell good fellowship<sup>1</sup> then come at a call<sup>1</sup>  
 Then wait at an inch, you idle knaves all  
 Then sparing and pinching, and nothing of gift  
 No talk with our master, but all for his thrift<sup>1</sup>  
 Solemn and sour, and angry as a wasp,  
 All things must be kept under lock and hasp,  
 All<sup>1</sup> that which will make me to fare full ill  
 All your care shall be to hamper poor Will

## WIF

I warrant thee, for that take thou no thought,  
 Thou shalt be made of, whosoever be set at nought  
 As dear to me, as mine own dear brother,  
 Whosoever be one, thou shalt be another

## WILL

Yea, but your wife will play the shrew, perdrè, it  
 is she that I fear

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *at that*

WIT

The message will cause her some favour to bear,  
For my sake and thy sake, and for her own likewise,  
If thou use thyself discreetly in this enterprise

WILL

She hath a father, a testy, souer old man  
I doubt lest he and I shall fall out now and then

WIT

Give him fair words, forbear him for his age,  
Thou must consider him to be ancient and sage  
Shew thyself officious and serviceable still,  
And then shall Reason make very much of Will

WILL

If your wife be ever complaining, how then?

WIT

My wife will have nothing to do with my men

WILL

If she do, believe her not in any wise  
And when you once perceive her stomach to arise,  
Then cut her short at the first, and you shall see  
A marvellous virtue in that medicine to be  
Give her not the bridle for a year or twain,  
And you shall see her bridle it without a rein,  
Break her betimes, and bring her under by force,  
Or else the grey mare will be the better house

WIT

If thou have done, begone, and spend no time in  
vain

WILL

Where shall I find you, when I come again?

WIT

At home

WILL

Good, enough, take your ease let me alone with  
this [Exit Wit

Surely a treasure of all treasures it is  
To seive such a master, as I hope him to be,  
And to have such a servant as he hath of me,  
For I am quick, nimble, proper and nice,  
He is full good, gentle, sober and wise  
He is full loth to chide or to check,  
And I am as willing to seive at a beck,  
He orders me well, and speaks me so fair,  
That for his sake no travail I must spare  
But now am I come to the gate of this lady,  
I will pause a while to frame mine eriant finely  
And lo, where she cometh, yet will I not come  
nigh her,  
But among these fellows will I stand to eye her

## ACT II, SCÆNA 2

REASON, EXPERIENCE, SCIENCE, and WILL

SCIENCE

My parents, ye know, how many fall and lapse,<sup>1</sup>  
That do ascribe to me the cause of then mi-haps?  
How many seek, that come too short of their  
desire  
How many do attempt, that daily do retue

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *in laps*

How many rove about the mark on every side  
How many think to hit, when they are much too  
    wide  
How many run too far, how many light too low  
How few to good effect their travail do bestow !  
And how all these impute their losses unto me  
Should I have joy to think of marriage now, trow  
    ye ?  
What saith<sup>1</sup> the world ? my love alone, say they,  
Is bought so dear, that life and goods for it must  
    pay  
Strong youth must spend itself, and yet, when all  
    is done,  
We hear of few or none, that have this lady won  
On me they make outcries, and charge me with the  
    blood  
Of those, that for my sake adventure life and  
    good  
This grief doth wound my heart so, that suitors  
    more as yet  
I see no cause nor reason why I should admit

## REASON

Ah, daughter, say not so, there is great cause and  
    skill,  
For which you should mislike to live unmarried  
    thus alone,  
What comfort can you have remaining thus un-  
    known ?  
How shall the commonwealth by you advanced be,  
If you abide inclosed here, where no man may you  
    see ?  
It is not for your state yourself to take the pain  
All strangers shall resort to you to entertain

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *doth*

To suffer free access of all that come and go  
 To be at each man's call to travel to and fro  
 What then, since God hath plac'd such treasure in  
     your breast,  
 Wherewith so many thousand think by you to be  
     refresh'd,  
 Needs must you have some one of high and secret  
     trust,  
 By whom these things may be well-order'd and  
     discuss'd  
 To him you must disclose the depth of all your  
     thought,  
 By him, as time shall serve, all matters must be  
     wrought  
 To him alone you must content yourself to be at  
     call,  
 Ye must be his, he must be yours, he must be all  
     in all

## EXPERIENCE

My lord, your father tells you truth, perdè,  
 And that in time yourself shall find and try

## SCIENCE

I could allege more than as yet I have said,  
 But I must yield, and you must be obey'd  
 Fall out, as it will there is no help, I see,  
 Some one or other in time must marry me

## WILL

In time ? nay, out of hand, madam, if it please you,  
 In faith, I know a youngker that will ease you,  
 A lively young gentleman, as fresh as any flower,  
 That will not stick to marry you within this hour

## WIT AND SCIENCE

### SCIENCE

Such haste might haply turn to waste to some ,  
But I pray thee, my pretty boy, whence art thou  
come ?

### WILL

If it please your good ladyship to accept me so  
I have a solemn message to tell, ere I go ,  
Not anything in secret your honour to stain,  
But in the presence and hearing of you twain

### REASON

Speak

### WILL

The lady of this world, which lady Nature hight,  
Hath one a peerless son, in whom she taketh  
delight,  
On him she chaargeth men to be attendant still,  
Both kin<sup>1</sup> to her his name is Wit, my name is  
Will

The noble child doth feel the force of Cupid's flame,  
And seeketh<sup>2</sup> now for ease, by counsel of his dame  
His mother taught him first to love, while he was  
young

Which love with age increaseth sore, and waxeth  
wondrous strong,  
For very fame displays your bounty more and  
more,

And at this pinch he burneth so as never hereto-  
fore

Not fantasies forsooth,<sup>3</sup> not vain and idle toys of  
love ,

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *kind*

<sup>2</sup> Old copy, *sendeth*

<sup>3</sup> Old copy, *force*



Not hope of that which commonly doth other  
     suits move,  
 But fixed fast good-will that never shall relent,  
 And virtue's force, that shines in you, bad him give  
     this attempt  
 He hath no need of wealth, he wooes not for your  
     good,  
 His kindred is such he need not to seek to match  
     with noble blood,  
 Such store of friends that, where he list, he may  
     command,  
 And none so hardy to presume his pleasure to  
     withstand  
 Yourself it is, [madam,] your virtue and your grace,  
 Your noble gifts, your endless praise in every place  
 You alone, I say, the mark that he would hit,  
 The hoped joy, the dearest prey, that can befall to  
     Wit

## EXPERIENCE

I have not heard a message more trimly done

## SCIENCE

Nor I, what age art thou of, my good son?

## WILL

Between eleven and twelve, madam, more or less

## REASON

He hath been instructed this errand, as I guess

## SCIENCE

How old is the gentleman thy master, canst thou  
     tell?

WILL

Seventeen or thereabout, I wot not very well

SCIENCE

What stature, of what making, what kind of port  
bears he ?

WILL

Such as your ladyship cannot mislike, trust me  
Well-grown, well-made, a stripling clean and tall  
Well-favoured, somewhat black, and manly there-  
withal,  
And that you may conceive his personage the  
better,  
Lo, here of him the very shape and lively picture !  
This hath he sent to you to view and to behold  
I dare advouch no joint therein, no jot, to be con-  
troll'd

SCIENCE

In good faith, I thank thy master with my heart ,  
I perceive that nature in him hath done her part

WILL

Farther, if it please your honour to know  
My master would be glad to run, ride, or go,  
At your commandment to any place far or near,  
To have but a sight of your ladyship there  
I beseech you appoint him the place and the hour,  
You shall see, how readily to you he will scour

REASON

Do so

EXPERIENCE

Yea, in any wise, daughter , for, hear you me,

He seemeth a right worthy and trim young man  
to be

## SCIENCE.

Commend me then to Wit, and let him understand,  
That I accept with all my heart this present at his  
hand,  
And that I would be glad, when he doth see his  
time,  
To hear and see him face to face within this house  
of mine  
Then may he break his mind, and talk with me his  
fill,  
Till then, adieu, both he and thou, mine own sweet  
little Will

[*Exeunt Science, Reason, Experience*]

## ACT II, SCÆNA 3

## WILL

Ah flattering quean, how neatly she can talk,  
How minionly she trips, how sadly she can walk !  
Well, wanton, yet beware that ye be sound and  
sure,  
Fair words are wont ofttimes fair women to allure,  
Now must I get me home, and make report of  
this  
To him, that thinks it long till my return, I-WIS  
[*Exit*]

## ACT III, SCÆNA 1

## WIT and WILL

## WIT

Say'st thou me so, boy ? will she have me indeed ?

WILL

Be of good cheer, sir , I warrant you to speed

WIT

Did both her parents speak well to her of me ?

WILL

As heart can think , go on, and you shall see

WIT

How took she the picture ? How liketh she my  
person ?

WILL

She never had done toting<sup>1</sup> and looking thereon

WIT

And when must I come to talk with her my fill ?

WILL

Whensoever you please, and as oft as you will

WIT

O my sweet boy, how shall I recompense  
Thy faithful heart and painful diligence ?  
My hope, my stay, my wealth, the key of all my  
joy !

WILL

I pray you, sir, call me your man, and not your  
boy

---

<sup>1</sup> Peeping

WIT

Thou shalt be what thou wilt, all in all

WILL

Promise me faithfully that, if your wife brawl,  
Or set her father to check me out of measure,  
You will not see me abused to their pleasure

WIT

Give me thy hand, take here my faith and troth,  
I will maintain thee, howsoever the world goeth

## ACT III, SCÆNA 2

*The house of SCIENCE WILL, WIT, also REASON  
and SCIENCE behind*

WIT

What shall we do? Shall we stand lingering  
here?

WILL

If you be a man, press in and go near

WIT

What, if there be some other suitor there?

WILL

And if there be, yet need you not to fear,  
Until I bring his head to you upon a spear.  
I will not look you in the face, nor in your sight  
appear

## REASON

Nay, Wit, advise yourself, and pause a while,  
O! else this haste of yours will you beguile

## SCIENCE

No haste but good, take time and learn to fight,  
Learn to assault, learn to defend a right  
Your match<sup>1</sup> is monstrous to behold and full of  
    might,  
Whom you must vanquish, not by force, but by  
    sleight

## WIT

Madam, stand to your promise, if I win, I am  
    sped,  
Am I not?

## SCIENCE

Yea, truly

## WILL

Good enough, if we fight not, I would we were  
    dead,  
No man shall stay us, that bears a head

## EXPERIENCE

Young man, a word or twain, and then adieu  
Your years are few, your practice green and new,  
Mark what I say, and ye shall find it true  
You are the first that shall this rashness rue  
Be ruled here our counsel do thereafter  
Lay good ground, your work shall be the faster  
This headlong haste may sooner miss than hit,  
Take heed both of witless<sup>2</sup> Will and wilful Wit

---

<sup>1</sup> Rival

<sup>2</sup> Old copy, *wit s*

We have within a gentleman, our retainer and our friend,

With servants twain, that do on him attend—  
Instruction, Study, Diligence these three  
At your commandment in this attempt shall be  
Hear them instead of us, and as they shall devise,  
So hardly cast your<sup>1</sup> cards in this enterprise  
I will send them to you, and leave you for now

WIT

The more company the merrier, boy, what say'st thou<sup>2</sup>

WILL

It is a good fault to have more than enou'  
I care not, so as we may put the knaves down,  
I would we were at it, I pass not how soon

WIT

If it shall please you to send those three hither,  
We will follow your counsel, and go together

WILL

I warrant her a shrew, whosoever be another,  
God make the daughter good, I like not the  
mother [Aside]

WIT<sup>2</sup>

Yet would not I for no good to have forgone her  
[Aside]

WILL

Marry, sir, indeed she talks and takes on her,  
Like a dame, nay, like a duchess or a queen,  
With such a solemnity as I have not seen

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *our*

<sup>2</sup> Old copy, *Reason*

## REASON

She is a queen, I tell thee, in her degree

## WILL

Let her be what she list, with a vengeance, for me<sup>1</sup>  
I will keep me out of her reach, if I can [*Aside*

## REASON

If this marriage go forward, thou must be her man

## WILL

Marriage or marriage not, beshrew me then,  
I have but one master, and I will serve no mo,  
And if he anger me, I will forsake him too

## REASON

She shall not hurt thee, unless her cause be juster

## WILL

By the faith of my body, sir, I intend not to trust  
her

## REASON

Why?

## WILL

Take<sup>1</sup> me this woman, that talks so roundly,  
That be so wise, that reason so soundly  
That look so narrow, that speak so shrill  
Their words are not so cursed, but their deeds are  
ill

## REASON

It is but thy fancy, I see no such thing in her

---

<sup>1</sup> i e, Take away from me



WILL

Perhaps you had never occasion to try her ?

REASON

That were great marvel in so many years

WILL

She hath won the mastery of you, it appears

WIT

Well, quiet yourself, thou shalt take no wrong,  
Methink our three companions tarry very long

## ACT III, SCÆNA 3

INSTRUCTION, STUDY, DILIGENCE, REASON, WIT,

WILL

INSTRUCTION

Sir, we are come to know your pleasure

REASON

You are come in good time, Instruction, our treasure,

This gentleman craveth your acquaintance and aid  
What you may do for him, let him not be deny'd

WIT

Welcome, good fellows, will ye dwell with me ?

DILIGENCE

If all parties be pleased, content are we

## WIT

Welcome, Instruction, with all my heart

## WILL

What, three new servants<sup>1</sup> then, farewell, my part  
[*Aside*]

## INSTRUCTION

I heartily thank you, and look what I can do,  
I<sup>1</sup> shall be always ready to pleasure you

## REASON

Consider and talk together with these,  
And you shall find in your travail great ease  
Take here of me, before I take my leave,  
This glass of crystal clear, which I you give,  
Accept it, and reserve it for my sake most sure,  
Much good to you in time it may procure  
Behold yourself therein, and view and pry  
Mark what defects it will discover and descry,  
And so with judgment ripe and curious eye,  
What is amiss endeavour to supply,  
Farewell—

## WIT

Farewell to you, right honourable sir  
And commend me to my love, my heart's desire,  
Let her think on me, when she sees me not, and  
wish me well

## WILL

Farewell, master Reason, think upon us, when you  
see us not,  
And in any wise let not Will be forgot

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *It*

## WIT

Since I must take advice and counsel of you three,  
 I must intreat you all to dwell in house with me,  
 And look what order you shall prescribe as needful,  
 To keep the same you shall find me as heedful  
 Come

## INSTRUCTION

[I] come

## WIT

[I] go

[*Ereunt*]

## ACT IV, SCÆNA 1

WIT, WILL, INSTRUCTION, STUDY, DILIGENCE

## WILL

Tush, tush, Instruction, your talk is of no force  
 You tell us a tale of a roasted horse,  
 Which, by his wounds, except we set to it,  
 As fast as we make, these <sup>1</sup> fellows will undo it,  
 Then talk is nothing but soft, and fan, and tany,  
 If you follow their counsel, you shall never marry

## INSTRUCTION

To follow our counsel your charge and promise  
 was

## WIT

I would I had never known you, by the mass  
 Must I look so long, and spend my life with toil?  
 Nay, sure, I will either win it, or take the foil

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *this*

## STUDY

The suer is your ground, the better you shall  
bear it

## WILL

Ground us no ground, let him win it, and wear it

## INSTRUCTION

Good sir, be ruled, and leave this peevish elf

## WIT.

I had even as lief ye bad me hang myself,  
Leave him? no, no, I would you all knew,  
You be but loiterers to him, my Will tells me true  
I could be content with a week, yea a month or  
twain,  
But three or four years! marry, that were a pain  
So long to keep me, and he like a hog

## WILL

A life, with all my heart, I would not wish a dog

## WIT

Will a week serve?

## STUDY

No

## WIT

A month?

## STUDY

Neither

WIT

No ?

STUDY

Not so

INSTRUCTION

No, nor so many mo

WIT

Then, farewell all, for, as I hope to thrive,  
I will prove him, ere I sleep, if I be alive,  
And if ye be mine, and good fellows all three,  
Go thither out of hand, and take your chance with  
me

INSTRUCTION

For my part, I know I can do you no good

WILL

You are a proper man of your hands, by the rood !  
Yet well fare him, that never his master forsaketh

WIT

What say'st thou, Study ?

STUDY

My head acheth

WIT

Out upon thee, coward ! speak, Diligence

DILIGENCE

Against Instruction's mind, I am loth to go hence,  
Yet I will make one, rather than you should lack

WIT

Perhaps we may find them at this time in bed

WILL

So much the rather look you to be sped,  
Care for no more, but once to come within hei,  
And when you have done, then let another win hei

WIT

To come within her, child? what meanest thou by  
that?

WILL

One mass for a penny, you know what is what!

WIT

Heard you ever such a counsel of such a Jack sprat?

WILL

Why, sir, do ye think to do any good,  
If ye stand in a corner like Robin Hood?  
Nay, you must stout it, and face it out with the  
best  
Set on a good countenance, make the most of the  
least,  
Whosoever skip in, look to your part,  
And while you live, beware of a false heart

WIT

Both blame and shame rash boldness doth breed

WILL

You must adventure both spare to speak, spare  
to speed

What tell you me of shame ? it is shame to steal a  
horse

WIT

More haste than good speed makes many fare the  
worse

WILL.

But he that takes not such time, while he may,  
Shall leap at a whiting, when time is away

WIT

But he that leaps, before he look, good son,  
May leap in the mire, and miss when he hath done  
[*Enter Science, Reason, and Experience*]

SCIENCE

Methink I hear the voice of Will, Wit's boy

WIT

I see her come, her sorrow and my joy,  
My salve and yet my sore, my comfort and my  
care,  
The causer of my wound, and yet the well of my  
welfare,  
O happy wight, that have the saint of your request,  
O hopeless hope, that holdeth me from that which  
likes me best !  
Twixt hope and fear I stand, to mar or else to  
make,  
This day to be relieved quite, or else my death-  
wound to take

REASON

Here let us rest awhile, and pause all three

## EXPERIENCE

Daughter, sit down, belike this same is he

## WILL

Be of good cheer, sir, be ruled by me  
Women are best pleased, till they be used homely,  
Look her in the face, and tell your tale stoutly

## WIT

O pearl of passing price, sent down from God on  
high,  
The sweetest beauty to entice, that hath been seen  
with eye  
The well of wealth to all, that no man doth annoy  
The key of kingdoms and the seal of everlasting  
joy  
The treasure and the store, whom all good things  
began,  
The nurse of lady Wisdom's love, the link of man  
and man  
What words shall me suffice to utter my desire?  
What heat of talk shall I devise, for to express my  
fire?  
I burn and yet I freeze, I flame and cool as fast,  
In hope to win and for to lose, my pensiveness  
doth last,  
Why should my dull spirit appal my courage so?  
O, salve my sore, or sle me quite, by saying yea or  
no!  
You are the mark at whom I shoot to hit or miss,  
My life it stays on you alone, to you my suit it is,  
A suit<sup>1</sup> not much unmeet with you some grace<sup>2</sup> to  
find,

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *Amity*

<sup>2</sup> Old copy, *grief*



Dame Nature's son, my name is Wit, that fancieth  
 you by kind,  
 And here I come this day to wait and to attend,  
 In hope to have my hoped prey,<sup>1</sup> or else my life to  
 end

## SCIENCE

Good cause there is, wherefore I should embrace,  
 This loving heart which you have borne to me,  
 And glad I am, that we be both in place,  
 Each one of us each other's looks to see  
 Your picture and your person doth agree,  
 Your prince-like port and eke your noble face,  
 Wherein so many signs of virtue be  
 That I must needs be moved in your case

## REASON

Friend Wit, are you the man indeed, which you  
 intend?<sup>2</sup>  
 Can you be well content, until your life doth end,  
 To join and knit most sure with this my daughter  
 here,  
 And unto her alone your fixed faith to bear?

## WIT

As I am bent to this, so let my suit be sped,  
 If I do fail, ten thousand plagues and more light  
 on my head!

## EXPERIENCE

There are, that promise fair, and mean as well,  
 As any heart<sup>3</sup> can think, or tongue can tell  
 Which at the first are hot, and kindle in desire,

<sup>1</sup> Prize<sup>2</sup> Pretend<sup>3</sup> Old copy, *heare*

But in one month or twain quite quenched is the  
fire  
Such is the train<sup>1</sup> of youth, whom fancy's force  
doth lead,  
Whose love is only at the plunge, and cannot long  
proceed

WIT

Credit my words, and ye shall find me true

EXPERIENCE

Suppose you keep not touch, who should thus bai  
gain rue<sup>2</sup>

WIT

I will be sworn here solemnly before you both

EXPERIENCE

Who breaketh promise, will not stick likewise to  
break his oath

WIT

I will be bound in all that ever I can make

EXPERIENCE

What good were that to us, if we th'advantage  
take<sup>2</sup>

WIT

Will neither promise serve, nor oath, nor bands<sup>2</sup>  
What other assurance will ye ask at my hands<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *trade*

<sup>2</sup> Bonds

## WILL

My master is a gentleman, I tell you, and his  
word,  
I would you knew it, shall with his deeds accord

## REASON

We know not whom to trust, the world is so ill

## WILL

Indeed, sir, as you say, you may mend, when ye  
will,  
But in good earnest, madam, speak—off or on?  
Shall we speed at your hand, or shall we be gone?  
I love not these delays, say so, if we shall have you,  
If not, say no, and let another crave you

## WIT

Soft and fan, sir boy, you talk you wot not what  
[*Aside*]

## WILL

Can you abide to be driven off with this and that,  
Can they ask any more than good assurance at  
your hands?  
[*Aside*]

## EXPERIENCE

All is now too little, son, as the matter stands

## WILL

If all be too little, both goods and lands,  
I know not what will please you, except Darby's  
bands<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> A proverbial expression not found in the collections. It may signify the hangman's cord

## SCIENCE.

I have an enemy, my friend Wit, a mortal foe to  
me,  
And therewithal the greatest plague that can befall  
to thee

## WIT

Must I fight with him ?

## REASON

Can you fight, if need be ?

## WILL

If any such thing fall, count the charge to me,  
Trouble not yourself

## WIT

Hold thy peace, elf

## SCIENCE

Hear out my tale, I have a mortal foe,  
That lurketh in the wood hereby, as you come and  
go,  
This monstrous giant bears a grudge to me and  
mine,  
And will attempt to keep thee back from this  
desire of thine  
The bane of youth, the root of ruin and distress <sup>1</sup>  
Devouring those that sue to me, his name is  
Tediousness  
No sooner he espies the noble Wit begin

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *desire*

To stir and pain itself the love of me to win  
But forth he steps, and with strong hands by  
    might and main  
He beats and buffets down the force and liveliness  
    of brain  
That done, in deep despair he drowns him villan-  
    ously  
Ten thousand suitors in a year are cast away  
    thereby  
Now, if your mind be surely fixed so,  
That for no toil nor cost my love you will forego,  
Bethink you well, and of this monster take good  
    heed,  
Then may you have with me the greater hope to  
    speed  
Herein use good advice, to make you strong and  
    stout,  
To feud and keep him off a while, until his rage be  
    out  
Then when you feel yourself well able to prevail,  
Bid you the battle, and that so courageously assail  
If you can win the field, present me with his head,  
I ask no more, and I forthwith shall be your own  
    to bed

## WIT

Ill might I thrive, and lack that likes me best,  
If I be not a scourge to him, that breedeth<sup>1</sup> your  
    unrest  
Madam, assure yourself, he lives not in the land,  
With whom I would not in your cause encounter  
    hand to hand  
And as for Tediousness that wretch, your common  
    foe,

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *breeds*

Let me alone, we twain shall cope, before I sleep,  
I trow

WILL

Lustily spoken, let me claw thee by the back  
How say you now, sn, here are three against  
twain<sup>1</sup>

STUDY

Go, that go list, I will at home remain,  
I have more need to take a nap in my bed

WILL

Do so, and, hear you, couch a cod's-head<sup>1</sup> [*Aside*

INSTRUCTION

Well, since it will none otherwise frame,  
Let us twain, Study, return<sup>1</sup> from whence we  
came

STUDY

Agreed [*Exit.*

WIT

And let us three bestir ourselves like men,  
Unlikely things are brought to pass by courage  
now and then  
My Will, be always prest, and ready at an inch,  
To save thyself, to succour me, to help at every  
pinch  
Both twain on either side assault him, if ye can,  
And you shall see me in the middles, how I will  
play the man,

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, and *return*



## WIT

Well shifted, Will, now have at thee, su knave

## TEDIOUSNESS

These fiscoles shall not serve your turn for all y our  
vaunts so brave,

Ho, ho ' did I not tell thee thou cam'st to thy  
pain !

## DILIGENCE

Help, help, help, our master is slain

## WILL

Help, help, help, &c

## TEDIOUSNESS

Where are these lusty bloods, that make them  
match with me ?

Here lies a pattern for them all, to look at and to see  
To teach them to conspire against my force and  
might,

To promise, for their woman's love, to vanquish  
me in fight

Now let them go and crike, how wisely they have  
sped,

Such is the end of those, that seek this curious  
dame to wed

[*Exit* TED

## ACT IV, SCÆNA 3

WILL, RECREATION, WIT

## WILL

Rub and chafe him

For God's love, haste, see, lo, where he doth lie



## RECREATION

He is not cold, I warrant him, I

## SING

*Give a leg, give an arm, arise, arise*

*Hold up<sup>1</sup> thy head, lift us thy eyes,*

*1 A leg to stand upright*

*2 An arm to fight again,*

*1 The head to hold thy brains in plight,*

*2 The eyes to look again*

*Awake, ye drowned powers*

*Ye sprites, for dull with toil*

*Resign to me this care of yours,*

*And from dead sleep recoil*

*Think not upon your loathsome luck,*

*But arise, and dance with us a-pluck*

*[Both sing, Give a leg, as is before*

*2 What, though thou hast not hit*

*The top of thy desire,*

*Time is not so far spent as yet*

*To cause thee to retire*

*Arise, and ease thyself of pain,*

*And make thee strong to fight again*

## SING BOTH

*Let not thy foes rejoice,*

*Let not thy friends lament,*

*Let not thy lady's rueful voice*

*In sobs and sighs be spent,*

*Thy faith is plight, forget it not,*

*Twixt her and thee to knit the knot*

## SING

*Give a leg, &c*

*This is no deadly wound*

*It may be cured well*

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, by

*See here what physic we have found  
Thy sorrows to expel*

*[Wit lifting himself up, sitting on the ground  
The way is plain, the mark is fair,  
Lodge not thyself in deep despair*

WIT <sup>1</sup>

What noise is this, that ringeth in my ears,  
Her noise that grieveth my mishap with tears?  
Ah, my mishap, my desperate mishap,  
On <sup>2</sup> whom ill-fortune poureth down all mishap at  
a clap,  
What shall become of me, where shall I hide my  
head?  
O, what a death is it to live for him that would be  
dead?  
But since it chanceth so, whatever wight thou be,  
That findeth me here in heavy plight, go, tell her  
this from me  
Causeless I perish here, and cause to curse I have  
The time that erst I lived to love, and now must  
die her slave,  
The match was over-much for me, she understood,  
Alas, why hath she this delight to lap in guiltless  
blood?  
How did I give her cause to show me this despite,  
To match me where she wist full well I should be  
slain in fight?  
But go, and tell her plain, although too late for me,  
Accursed be the time and hour, which first I did  
her see  
Accursed be the wight, that will'd me first thereto,  
And cursed be they all at once, that had therewith  
to do

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *Will*  
VOL II

<sup>2</sup> Old copy, *In*  
2 A

Now get thee hence in haste, and suffer me to die  
Whom scornful chance and lawless love have slain  
most traitorously

## RECREATION

O noble Wit, the miracle of God and eke of Nature  
Why cursest thou thyself and every other creature?  
What causeth thee thine innocent dear lady to  
accuse?  
Who would lament it more than she to hear this  
woful news?  
Why wilt thou die, whereas thou may'st be sure of  
health?  
Whereas thou seest a plain pathway to worship  
and to wealth  
Not every foil doth make a fall, nor every soil doth  
slay,  
Comfort thyself be sure thy luck will mend from  
day to day

## WILL

These gentlewomen of good skill are<sup>1</sup> come to make  
you sound,  
They know which way to salve your sore, and how  
to cure your wound  
Good sir, be ruled by her then, and pluck your  
spirit to you  
There is no doubt, but you shall find your loving  
lady true

## WIT

Ah, Will, art thou alive that doth my heart some  
ease,

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *This gentle news of good Will are* The gentle women referred to are *Recreation* and *Idleness*

The sight of thee, sweet boy, my sorrows doth  
appease  
How hast thou 'scap'd? what fortune thee befel?

WILL

It was no trusting to my hands, my heels did serve  
me well,  
I ran with open mouth to cry for help amain,  
And, as good fortune would, I hit upon these twain

WIT

I thank both thee and them, what will ye have  
me do?

RECREATION

To rise and dance a little space with us two

WIT

What then?

RECREATION

That done, repair again to Study and Instruction,  
Take better hold by then advice, your foe to set  
upon

WIT

Can any recompense recover this my fall?

RECREATION

My life to yours, it may be mended all

WIT

Speak, Will

WILL

I have no doubt, sir, it shall be, as you would wish

WIT

But yet this repulse of mine they will lay in my  
dish

RECREATION

No man shall let them know thereof, unless your  
self do it

WII

On that condition, a God's name, fall we to it

WILL

Nay, stand we to it, and let us fall no more

WIT

Will dancing serve, and I will dance, until my  
bones be sore,

Pipe us up a galliard, minstrel, to begin

*[Let Will call for dances, one after another]*

WILL

Come, damsel, in good faith, and let me have  
you in,

Let him practise in dancing all things to make  
himself breathless <sup>1</sup>

RECREATION

Enough at once, now leave, and let us part

WIT

This exercise hath done me good, even to the very  
heart

Let us be bold with you more acquaintance to take,

---

<sup>1</sup> A line seems to have dropped out here

And dance a round yet once more for my sake,  
 Enough is enough , farewell, and at your need  
 Use my acquaintance, if it may stand you in stead  
 Right worthy damsels both, I know you seek no  
     gains  
 In recompense of thus desert your undeserved  
     pains  
 But look what other thing my service may devise,  
 To show my thankful heart in any enterprise  
 Be ye as bold therewith, as I am bold on you,  
 And thus with hearty thanks I take my leave as  
     now

## RECREATION

Farewell, friend Wit, and since you are relieved,  
 Think not upon your foil, whereat you were so  
     griev'd,  
 But take your heart to you, and give attempt once  
     more  
 I warrant you to speed much better than before  
*[Exeunt]*

## ACT IV , SCÆNA 4.

WIT, WILL, IDLENESS, IGNORANCE.

WIT

One dance for thee and me , my boy, come on

WILL

Dance you, sir, if you please, and I will look upon

WIT.

This gear doth make me sweat, and breathe apace

## IDLENESS

Su, ease yourself awhile , here is a resting-place

## WIT

Home, Will, and make my bed, for I will take a  
nap

## IGNORANCE

Sure, and it please your mastership, here in my  
dame's lap

IDLENESS *singeth*

*Come, come, lie down, and thou shalt see,  
None like to me to entertain  
Thy bones and thee oppressed with pain  
Come, come, and ease thee in my lap,  
And if it please thee, take a nap,  
A nap, that shall delight thee so,  
That fancies all will thee forego  
By musing still, what canst thou find,  
But wants of will and restless mind?  
A mind that mars and mangles all,  
And breedeth jars to work thy fall !  
Come, gentle Wit, I thee require,  
And thou shalt hit thy chief desire  
Thy chief desire, thy hoped prey,  
First ease thee here, and then away*

## WIT

[*Falls down into her lap*  
My bones are stiff, and I am wearied sore,  
And still me-think I faint and feeble more and  
more ,  
Wake me again in time, for I have things to do,

And as you will me for mine ease, I do assent  
thereto

IDLENESS

[*Lulls him*

Welcome, with all my heart    sin boy, hold here  
this tin,  
And softly cool his face, sleep soundly, gentleman  
This char is char'd<sup>1</sup> well now, Ignorance, my son,  
Thou seest all this, how featly<sup>2</sup> it is done,  
But wot'st thou why?

IGNORANCE

Nay, bumfay,<sup>3</sup> mother, not I  
Well, I wot 'tis a gay worched trick and trim  
Should rejoyce my heart to chance coots<sup>4</sup> with  
him

IDLENESS

Dost thou remember how many I have served in  
the like sort?

IGNORANCE

It doth my heart good to think on this sport

IDLENESS

Wilt thou see this proper fellow served so?

<sup>1</sup> *ze*, That business is despatched See Hazlitt's "Pro verbs," 1869, p. 352

<sup>2</sup> Old copy, *fitly*

<sup>3</sup> By my faith

<sup>4</sup> *ze*, "It would rejoyce my heart to change coats with him"



## IGNORANCE

Chould give tway pence to see it and tway pence  
mo

## IDLENESS

Come off, then, let me see thee in his doublet and  
his<sup>1</sup> hose

## IGNORANCE

You shall see a tall fellow, mother, I suppose

## IDLENESS

Help off with this sleeve softly for fear of waking,  
We shall leave the gentleman in a pretty taking  
Give me thy coat, hold this in thy hand  
This fellow would be married to Science, I under-  
stand

But, ere we leave him, tell me another tale !  
Now let us make him look somewhat stale  
There lie, and there be the proverb is verified,  
I am neither idle, nor yet well-occupied

## IGNORANCE

Mother, must I have his coat ? now, mother, I  
must  
Chalt be a lively lad with hey tisty-tust

## IDLENESS

Sleep sound, and have no care to occupy thy head,  
As near unto thy body now, as if thou had'st been  
dead  
For Idleness hath won, and wholly thee possess'd,  
And utterly disabled thee from having thy request

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *thy*—*thy*, but Ignorance is to change clothes with Wit, while the latter sleeps in the lap of Idleness

Come on with me, my son, let us go couch again,  
And let this lusty ruffling Wit here like a fool re-  
main [Exeunt

## ACT V, SCÆNA 1

WIT, SCIENCE, REASON

WIT

Up and to go, why sleep I here so sound?  
How falls it out that I am left upon the naked  
ground?  
God grant that all be well, whilst I lay dreaming  
here  
Me-thinks all is not as it was, nor as I would it  
were  
And yet I wot not why, but so my fancies gives me,  
That some one thing or other in my tire<sup>1</sup> that  
grieves me,  
They are but fancies, let them go to Science now  
will I,  
My suit and business yet once again to labour and  
apply

[Enter Science and Reason

SCIENCE

What is become, trow ye, of Wit, our spouse that  
would be?

REASON

Daughter, I fear all is not as it should be

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *is my tryer* He has indistinct misgivings  
that his clothes are not all right

WIT.

Yes, yes, have ye no doubt, all is and shall be well.

REASON.

What one art thou ? thereof how canst thou tell ?

WIT.

Reason, most noble sir, and you, my lady dear :  
How have you done in all this time, since first I  
saw you here ?

SCIENCE.

The fool is mad, I ween ; stand back, and touch  
me not.

WIT.

You speak not as you think, or have you me forgot ?

SCIENCE.

I never saw thee in my life until this time, I wot ;  
Thou art some mad-brain or some fool, or some  
disguised sot.<sup>1</sup>

WIT.

God's fish-hooks ?<sup>2</sup> and know you not me ?

SCIENCE.

I had been well at ease indeed to be acquainted  
with thee !

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *scot.*

<sup>2</sup> Old copy, *fish-hosts.*

## WIT.

Hop haliday !<sup>1</sup> marry, this is pretty cheer,  
I have lost myself, I cannot tell where !  
An old-said saw it is, and too true, I find,  
Soon hot, soon cold : out of sight, out of mind.  
What, madam, what meaneth this sudden change ?  
What means this scornful look, this countenance so  
strange ?  
Is it<sup>2</sup> your fashion so to use your lovers at the  
first :  
Or have all women this delight to scold and to be  
curs'd ?

## REASON.

Good fellow, whence<sup>3</sup> art thou ? what is thy name ?

## WIT.

I ween ye are disposed to make at me some game.  
I am the son of lady Nature ; my name is Wit.

## REASON.

Thou shalt say so long enough, ere we believe it.

## SCIENCE.

Thou Wit ? nay, thou art some mad-brain out of  
thy wit.

## WIT.

Unto yourselves this trial I remit.  
Look on me better, and mark my person well.

---

<sup>1</sup> A colloquialism, of which the exact import must be matter of guess. Old copy, *Hope haliday*. Perhaps a corruption of *upon my haliday*.

<sup>2</sup> Old copy, *It is*.

## SCIENCE

Thy look is like to one, that came out of hell

## REASON

If thou be Wit, let see, what tokens thou canst  
tell

How cam'st thou first acquainted here? what said  
we?

How did we like thy suit, what entertainment  
made we?

## WIT

What tokens?

## SCIENCE

Yea, what tokens? speak, and let us know

## WIT

Tokens good store I can rehearse a-row  
First, as I was advised by my mother Nature,  
My lackey Will presented you with my picture

## SCIENCE

Stay there, now look, how these two faces agree!

## WIT

This is the very same that you received from me

## SCIENCE

From thee? why look, they are no more like,  
Than chalk to cheese, than black to white

## REASON

To put thee out of doubt, if thou think we say not  
true,  
It were good for thee in a glass thy face to view

## WIT

Well-remembered, and a glass I have indeed,  
Which glass you gave me to use at need

## REASON

Hast thou the glass, which I to Wit did give?

## WIT

I have it in my purse, and will keep it, while I live

## REASON

This makes<sup>1</sup> me muse how should he come  
thereby?

## WIT

Sir, muse no more, for it is even I,  
To whom you gave the glass, and here it is

## REASON

We are content thou try thy case by this

## WIT

[*Looking in the glass*  
Either my glass is wonderfully spotted,  
Or else my face is wonderfully blotted  
This is not my coat, why, where had I this weed?

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *These man's*.

By the mass, I look like a very fool indeed  
 O haps of haps, O rueful chance to me !  
 O Idleness, woe-worth the time, that I was ruled  
     by thee !  
 Why did I lay my head within thy lap to rest ?  
 Why was I not advis'd by her, that wish'd and  
     will'd <sup>1</sup> me best ?  
 O ten times treble <sup>2</sup> blessed wights, whose corps  
     in grave do lie  
 That we not driven to behold these wretched cares  
     which I <sup>3</sup> !  
 On me you <sup>4</sup> furies all, on me, have poured out  
     your spite,  
 Come now and slay me at the last, and rid my  
     sorrows quite  
 What coast shall me receive ? where shall I show  
     my head ?  
 The world will say this same is he that, if he list,  
     had sped  
 This same is he, that took an enterprise in hand ,  
 This same is he that scarce one blow his enemy  
     did withstand  
 This same is he, that fought and fell in open field  
 This same is he that in the song of Idleness did  
     yield  
 This same is he that was in way to win the game  
 To join himself whereby he should have won im-  
     mortal fame ,  
 And now is wrapp'd in woe, and buried in despair  
 O happy case for thee, if death would rid thee quite  
     of care !

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *will*

<sup>2</sup> Old copy, *trouble*

<sup>3</sup> Old copy, *die* The same appears to be, "That are not driven to behold those wretched cares, which I *am driven*, &c"

<sup>4</sup> Old copy, *your*

## ACT V, SCENE 2

SHAME, REASON, SCIENCE, WIT

REASON

Shame

SHAME

Who calls for Shame?

REASON

Here is a merchant,<sup>1</sup> Shame, for thee to tame

SHAME

A shame come to you all, for I am almost lame  
With trudging up and down to them that lose their  
game

REASON

And here is one, whom thou must rightly blame,  
That hath prefer'd his folly to his fame

SHAME

Who? this good fellow? what call you his name?

REASON

Wit, that on wooing to lady Science came

---

<sup>1</sup> Fellow The word is frequently used, as we now use the word *chap*, which is in fact the same, being an abbreviation of *chapman*



## SHAME

Come aloft, child, let me see, what fustols you can  
fet,<sup>1</sup>

## REASON

[If] he hath deserved it, let him be well-bet

## WIT

O, spare me with the whip, and sle me with thy  
knife  
Ten thousand times more dear to me were present  
death than life

## SHAME

Nay, nay, my friend, thou shalt not die as yet

## REASON

Remember in what case dame Nature left thee,  
Wit,  
And how thou hast abus'd the same—  
Thou hast deceived all our hope, as all the world  
may see

## SHAME

A shame

Come to it !—

## REASON

Remember, what fair words and promises thou  
diddest make,  
That for my daughter's love no pains thou wouldest  
forsake  
Remember in what sort we had a care of thee

<sup>1</sup> *Fet* (or *feat*) seems to be here employed in the sense of  
*play* or *perform* *Fustols* has occurred before in this play

Thou hast deceived all our hope, as all the world  
may see.

SHAME.

A shame come to it.

REASON.

Remember, how Instruction should have been fol-  
lowed still,  
And how thou wouldest be ruled by none but by  
Will.  
How Idleness hath crept, and reigneth in thy breast,  
How Ignorance her son hath wholly thee possess'd.

SHAME.

A shame come to it.

WIT.

O woful wretch, to whom shall I complain ?  
What salve may serve to salve my sore, or to  
redress my pain ?

REASON.

Nay, I can tell thee more : remember, how  
Thou was subdued of Tediousness right now.  
Remember with what crakes thou went unto his  
den,  
Against the good advice and counsel of thy men,  
What Recreation did for thee in these thy rueful  
haps,  
And how the second time thou fell into the lap.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> So old copy ; but perhaps we ought to read *this hap* in  
the line preceding.

## SHAME

A shame come to thee !

## WIT

O, let me breathe a while, and hold thy heavy hand,  
My grievous faults with Shame enough I understand  
Take ruth and pity on my plaint, or else I am  
forlorn ,

Let not the world continue thus in laughing me to  
scorn

Madam, if I be he, to whom you once were bent,  
With whom to spend your time sometime you were  
content

If any hope be left, if any recompense  
Be able to recover this forepassed negligence,  
O, help me now poor wretch in this most heavy  
plight,  
And furnish me yet once again with Tediousness  
to fight

## SCIENCE

Father, be good to these young tender years,  
See, how he doth bewail his folly past with tears !

## REASON

Hold, slave, take thou his coat for thy labour,  
We are content, at her request, to take you to our  
favour

Come in, and dwell with us, till time shall serve  
And from Instruction['s] rule look that thou never  
swerve

Within we shall provide to set you up once more,  
This scourge hath taught you, what default was in  
you heretofore

## ACT V, SCÆNA 3

## WILL

Once in my life I have an odd half-hour to spare,  
To ease myself of all my travail and my care  
I stood not still so long this twenty days, I ween,  
But ever more sent foith on messages I have been  
Such trudging and such toil, by the mass, was  
never seen,

My body is worn out, and spent with labour clean  
And this it is that makes me look so lean  
That lets my growth, and makes me seem a squall,<sup>1</sup>  
What then, although my stature be not tall,  
Yet I am as proper as you, so neat and cleanly,  
And have my joints at commandment full of  
activity

What should a servant do with all this flesh and  
bones,  
That makes them run with leaden heels, and stir  
themselves like stones?

Give me a proper squire much after my pitch,  
And mark how he from place to place will squich,<sup>2</sup>  
Fair or foul, thick or thin, mure or dusty,  
Cloud or rain, light or dark, clear or misty  
Ride or run, to or fro, bad or good  
A neat little fellow on his business will scud  
These great lubbers<sup>3</sup> are neither active nor wise,  
That feed till they sleep, and sleep out their eyes  
So heavy, so dull, so untoward in their doing,

---

<sup>1</sup> See Halliwell's *Dict in v*

<sup>2</sup> *Squich*, a word of most uncommon occurrence and of dubious meaning. From the immediate context we should infer that it signified *skip*, *move lightly and quickly*

<sup>3</sup> Old copy, *labores*

That it is a good sight to see them leave working  
 But all this while, while I stand prating here,  
 I see not my master, I left him snorting here  
[Exit

## ACT V, SCÆNA 4

SCIENCE, WIT, WILL, [*to them*] INSTRUCTION,  
 STUDY, DILIGENCE, TEDIOUSNESS

### SCIENCE

Mine own dear Wit, the hope of mine avail,  
 My care, my comfort, my treasure and my trust,  
 Take heart of grace our enemy to assail,  
 Lay up these things, which you have heard discuss'd,  
 So doing, undoubtingly you cannot fail  
 To win the field, to 'scape all these unhappy  
     shewers,<sup>1</sup>  
 To glad your friends, to cause your foes to wail,  
 To match with us, and then the gain is yours  
 Here in this closet ourself will sit and see  
 Your manly feats and your success in fight  
 Strike home courageously for you and me,  
 Learn where and how to fend, and how to smite  
 In any wise, be ruled by these three,  
 They shall direct both you and Will aright  
 Farewell, and let our loving counsel be  
 At every hand before you in your fight

### WIT

Here in my sight, good madam, sit and view  
 That, when I list, I may look upon you  
 This face, this noble face, this lively hue,

---

<sup>1</sup> Query, *examples*.

Shall harden me, shall make our enemy rue  
O faithful mates, that have this care of me,  
How shall I ever recompense your pains with gold  
    or fee?  
Come now, and, as you please, enjoin me how to  
    do it,  
And you shall see me prest and serviceable to it

## WILL

Why, master, whither [a]way? what haste? am I  
    no body?

## INSTRUCTION

What, Will, we may not miss thee for no money

## WIT

Welcome, good Will, and do as thou art bid,  
This day or never must Tediousness be rid

## WILL

God speed us well, I will make one at all assays

## INSTRUCTION

Thou shalt watch to take him at certain bays,  
Come not in the throng, but save thyself always  
You twain on either side first with your sword and  
    buckler,  
After the first conflict, fight with your sword and  
    daggers,  
You, sir, with a javelin and your target in your  
    hand,  
See how ye can his deadly strokes withstand  
Keep at the foin,<sup>1</sup> come not within his reach,

---

<sup>1</sup> *Push, &c.*, do not close

Until you see, what good advantage you may catch  
Then hardly leave him not, till time you strike him  
    dead,  
And, of all other parts, especially save your head

WIT

Is this all, for I would fain have done ?

WILL

I would we were at it, I care not how soon

INSTRUCTION

Now, when ye please , I have no more to tell,  
But heartily to pray for you, and wish you well

WIT

I thank you , go thou, and bid the battle, Will

WILL

Come out, thou monster fell, that hast desire to spill  
The knot and linked love of Science and of Wit,  
Come, try the quarrel in the field, and fight with  
    us a fit

## ACT V, SCÆNA 5

TEDIOUSNESS, WIT, WILL, INSTRUCTION, STUDY,  
DILIGENCE.

TEDIOUSNESS

A doughty dust <sup>1</sup> these four boys will do  
I will eat them by morsels, two and two <sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *duste* (dirt) We still say, *to make a dust*

Thou fightest for a wife ! a rod, a rod !  
 Had I wist this, I would have laid on load,  
 And beat thy brain and this my club together,  
 And made thee safe enough for returning hither

## WILL

A foul whoreson ! what a sturdy thief it is !  
 But we will pelt thee, knave, until for woe thou  
 piss

## TEDIOUSNESS

Let me come to that elf

## WIT

Nay, nay, thou shalt have work enough to save  
 thyself [*Fright*

## INSTRUCTION

Take breath, and change your weapons, play the  
 men

## TEDIOUSNESS

Somewhat it was that made thee come again  
 Thou stickest somewhat better to thy tackling, I  
 see,  
 But what, no force, ye are but Jack-Sprat to me

## WIT

Have hold, here is a morsel for thee to eat  
[*Strikes*

## STUDY, INSTRUCTION

Here is a pelt to make your knave's heart fret

## DILIGENCE

There is a blow able to fell a hog



## WIT

And here is a foin behind for a mad dog !

[Let Will trip you<sup>1</sup> down

Hold, hold, hold, the lubber is down!

## TEDIOUSNESS

O t

WILL.

Strike off his head, while I hold him by the crown

## WIT

Thou monstrous wretch, thou mortal foe to me and  
mine.

Which evermore at my good luck and fortune  
did'st repine,

Take here thy just desert and payment for thy hire  
Thy head this day shall me prefer unto my heart's  
desire

## INSTRUCTION

O noble Wit, the praise, the game is thine

## STUDY

Hove up his head upon your spear, lo, here a joyful sign !

## DILIGENCE

O valiant knight, O conquest full of praise !

WILL

O bliss<sup>2</sup> of God to see these happy days !

<sup>1</sup> A direction to *Tediousness*, that he is to be tripped up by *Will*

<sup>2</sup> Old copy, *blest*

## WIT

You, you, my faithful squires, deserve no less,  
Whose tried trust, well-known to me in my distress  
And certain hope of your fix'd faith and fast good-  
will,  
Made me attempt this famous fact, most needful to  
fulfil  
To you I yield great thanks, to me redounds the  
gain,  
Now home apace, and ring it out, that Tediousness  
is slain  
Say all at once, *Tediousness is slain*

## ACT V, SCÆNA 6

## SCIENCE, WIT

## SCIENCE

I hear and see the joyful news, wherein I take  
delight,  
That Tediousness, our mortal foe, is overcome in  
fight  
I see the sign of victory, the sign of manliness  
The heap of happy haps the joy that tongue can-  
not express  
Our<sup>1</sup> welcome fame from day to day for ever shall  
arise

## WIT

Avaunt, ye griping cares, and lodge no more in me,  
For you have lost, and I have won continual joys  
and fee

---

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, *O*

Now let me freely touch, and freely you embrace,  
And let my friends with open mouth proclaim my  
blssful case

SCIENCE

The world shall know, doubt not, and shall blow  
out your fame,  
Then true report shall send abroad your everlasting  
name  
Now let our parents dear be certified of this,  
So that our marriage may forthwith proceed, as  
meet it is  
Come after me, all five, and I will lead you in

WIT

My pain is pass'd, my gladness to begin,  
My task is done, my heart is set at rest,  
My foe subdued, my lady's love possess'd  
I thank my friends, whose help I had <sup>1</sup> at need,  
And thus you see, how Wit and Science are agreed,  
We twain henceforth one soul in bodies twain  
must dwell  
Rejoice, I pray you all with me, my friends, and  
fare ye well

FINIS

<sup>1</sup> Old copy, have

END OF VOL II

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